

## Computing Science



This update contains information relevant to your subject and details of the support available to you.

We also publish updates on the new National Courses in the 'Updates and Announcements' section of the relevant **subject pages**. I would encourage you to make regular use of our subject pages, where you will find support documents, answers to common questions, and links to other areas of interest. You can also sign up for 'My Alerts', SQA's e-mail update service, that notifies you whenever content you are interested in is added or updated on SQA's website. Visit **[www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts](http://www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts)** to register.

I hope you find the following update helpful, and please contact me if you have any questions.

**Dave Main**  
Qualifications Manager

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## The Qualifications Team

Dave Main  
Qualifications Manager

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Qualifications Officer

## Documents and assessment support materials

Assessment support materials are now available for the new National 1 to Advanced Higher Qualifications, marking a significant milestone. It is important that you read the full suite of documents for your Course, as well as those relating to assessment.

Further information on documents and assessment support materials can be found at [www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments](http://www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments)

### Updates to documents

#### Advanced Higher documents

We are making planned updates to Advanced Higher documents. This follows the publication of Advanced Higher Specimen Question Papers, Coursework information and Unit assessment support packs. The updated Advanced Higher **Unit Specifications**, **Course Specifications** and **Course Assessment Specifications** are available now.

The key changes to these documents are as follows:

- Information System Design and Development Unit — addition of new Outcome1 and revision to Outcomes 2 and 3.
- Software Design and Development Unit — changes to Outcome 2 and Assessment Standards in all three Outcomes.
- Course Assessment Specification — duration of examination increased to 2 hours.

We will also update the Advanced **Higher Course and Unit Support Notes**, and finalise all packages of Advanced Higher **Unit assessment support** by the end of May 2015.

Further details of changes to Advanced Higher documents are outlined in the [January 2015 subject update](#). The Notification of Changes spreadsheets have been updated to reflect the latest changes to documents. You can view these spreadsheets at [www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges)

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## National 3 to Higher documents

We are updating some published documents for Computing Science and these will be available by the end of June 2015.

There are some minor alterations across our Course documents to add clarity where required and we have also consolidated some Assessment Standards.

The largest change is the removal of Outcome 3 from the Software Design and Development Unit at National 4 through to Higher. The content and skills of this Outcome are still part of the Course and continue to feature in the Course Assessment Specification. However, there is no longer a need to deliver and assess this as part of the Software Design and Development Unit.

Additionally, the Unit Assessment Support Packs will be amended by the end of August 2015 to take account of these changes and to streamline assessment where possible. Relevant Understanding Standards packs and prior verified assessments will be reviewed in due course.

The updated documents will be accompanied by comparison documents, as appropriate. The comparison documents clearly illustrate what changes have been made and will help you to quickly and easily identify the updates. Comparison documents are available from the **subject pages** and sit alongside the 'clean' versions of the updated documents. Where required, Course and Unit Support Notes will be updated to correspond with these changes. Updated Course and Unit Support Notes will be published by the end of June 2015.

The Notification of Changes spreadsheets will be updated to reflect the latest changes to documents. You can view these spreadsheets at **[www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges)**

## Support and guidance

To further support centres that are moving to the new Higher Courses, we are running a series of transition events in partnership with Education Scotland. These events will take place in the last week of May 2015 and can be booked via the **Event Booking System** on SQA's website.

## Looking ahead to 2015/16

### Understanding Standards

In June 2015, we will publish further Understanding Standards packs for National 1 to Higher, which will contain candidate evidence and commentaries for Unit assessment and internally assessed components of Course assessment.

The Understanding Standards programme will continue throughout session 2015/16, and will include Nominee training events, Understanding Standards events for Higher, and Understanding Standards packs.

Nominee training events for Computing Science will take place:

- early autumn 2015
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Understanding Standards events for Higher Computing Science will take place:

- November 2015 and January 2016

For more information on Understanding Standards, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/understandingstandards](http://www.sqa.org.uk/understandingstandards)

### **Continuous Professional Development support**

We will continue to offer subject-specific CPD support for new National Courses, where particular areas of concern are identified that are not already addressed by the Understanding Standards programme.

From August 2015, we will also offer subject-specific CPD support to assist teachers and lecturers with the implementation of the new Advanced Higher Courses.

### **Use of National 4 Added Value Units**

From August 2015 onwards, you will have the option of developing your own National 4 Added Value Unit assessments for use with candidates. Please note that this is not a requirement and you can continue to use SQA-produced Added Value Unit assessments until further notice. Most SQA-produced Added Value Unit assessments already allow considerable flexibility in the choice of a context for the assessment, while some provide a context that you can change.

Further information can be found at [www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment)

### **Advanced Higher Exemplar Question Papers**

In December 2015, we will publish Exemplar Question Papers for all new Advanced Higher Courses that include a question paper as part of the Course assessment.

Further information on Exemplar Question Papers, and other available assessment support materials, can be found at [www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments](http://www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments)

#### **Contact SQA**

For centre enquiries, please contact our Customer Support Team:

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