Arrangements for:

National Progression Award (NPA) in Digital Media Basics

at SCQF level 4

Group Award Code: G9FD 44

Validation date: May 2009

Date of original publication: September 2009

Version: 01

Acknowledgement

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification, and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below.

Version number	Description	Date	Authorised by

Contents

1   Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the *National Progression Award (NPA) in Digital Media Basics at SCQF level 4*, which was validated in May 2009. This document includes: background information on the development of the Group Award, its aims, guidance on access, details of the Group Award structure, and guidance on delivery.

The National Progression Award (NPA) in Digital Media Basics is a new award at SCQF level 4 and consists of three NQ Units drawn from the framework of the National Certificate in Digital Media Computing at SCQF level 4. They provide progression through the SCQF level 4 Units for candidates who wish to develop their knowledge and skills in the acquisition of digital media.

Candidates will gain fundamental knowledge required in acquisition techniques while also gaining practical skills in a range of software applications.

Training providers have stated that the qualification could be used with a number of groups. They suggest inclusion of some or all of the Units in national programmes such as Get Ready for Work or Training for Work, where combined with development of employability skills and appropriate work experience, the NPA would provide underpinning knowledge which would enhance work readiness.

2   Rationale for the development of the Group Award

The rationale for developing the National Progression Award (NPA) Digital Media Basics at SCQF level 4, is to address a demand for provision of an entry-level qualification in various digital media areas, especially one that may be gained through short-course or flexible provision.

In recent years, there has been rapid uptake of HNC/HND and degree level courses in multimedia, web design, digital media, creative arts and related disciplines. However, as yet there has been no nationally devised course that specifically addresses these disciplines at lower levels in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), or allows natural articulation to higher levels of study.

Use of the digital media has grown to the extent that over half the households in the UK have access to it at home and some 80% of businesses make use of it. In recent years the government has made clear its intention that its citizens should have access to information, advice and support from government bodies and local councils in electronic form through the internet. It has funded a range of initiatives to improve the infrastructure for public access to the internet, in community centres, libraries, shops and other public places. As a result, the further education and community education sectors have seen a corresponding increase in demand for entry qualifications in aspects of the digital media. The rationale for the development of this NPA (National Progression Award) in Digital Media Basics is to address the demand for provision of an entry qualification in the use of these elements on computer systems.

This NPA will offer a candidate a foundation in a fundamental area within the digital media area. This award will also introduce candidates to a range of tools to acquire various digital elements from a range of different sources.

This award is suitable for a wide range of candidates — from secondary school pupils through to the 'silver surfer' generation. It will be beneficial to candidates in employment as well as those wishing to acquire skills to enter or re-enter the workplace.

This award is composed of existing Units which form part of the National Certificate in Digital Media Computing awards. Candidates undertaking the National Certificate in Digital Media Computing awards have the opportunity to be certificated for this National Progression Award depending on their choice of Units within their programme of study. Conversely, candidates who achieve the National Progression Award will have SCQF credits that can count towards the National Certificate in Digital Media Computing awards or progression into other areas.

The qualification focuses on technical skills in the creation of images, editing images and producing the finished creations with a computing slant, but also emphasises the importance of the design process and soft skills such as interviewing and responding to feedback. Some aspects of the qualification also address demands from industry and government for the promotion of 'employability skills'. Successful candidates should be expected to have an appreciation of important employability skills such as collaboration, communicating with a client, problem solving and reflective practice, as well as being able to produce aesthetically pleasing product.

3 Aims of the Group Award

This award is new for the sector and does not replace any existing awards. This award will provide an opportunity for centres to offer a certificated course based around a grouping of Units relating to audio, video and still images within the digital media area at SCQF level 4.

3.1 Principal aims of the Group Award

♦ To meet client demands and provide industry with well-qualified and competent juniors to work in the digital media area.
♦ To provide candidates with the specialist skills required to access career opportunities in current and future markets.
♦ To ensure that advances in software skills are matched by advances in employability skills such as working with clients, receiving feedback and responding to change.
♦ To promote and maintain the importance of these digital elements to be included within the design and development of products being produced in media studies, computing, multimedia, interactive media, animation, websites and/or web-based media products.
♦ To provide candidates with a foundation to start a new pathway to higher level studies in media studies, computing, multimedia, interactive media, animation and related subjects, through short-course provision.
♦ To develop an understanding of the legislative issues related to ownership.
♦ To provide candidates access to industry-standard software and principles.

3.2 General aims of the Group Award

The general aim of this award is to produce a robust qualification that allows a candidate to enter vocational education, and centres to provide a solid grounding to candidates. This is achieved by:

♦ producing specialist ASPs for centres
♦ producing a flexible award that is appropriate for a variety of delivery modes
♦ addressing predicted skills gaps
♦ enhancing the portfolio available to centres by mapping to the NOS and the vendor qualification(s)
♦ ensuring that candidates gain appropriate knowledge and understanding in all Units
♦ allowing a candidate to build their knowledge and/or skills by undertaking a series of National Progression awards similar to this award or to progress to a selection of different National Certificates awards, particularly the Digital Media Computing suite, or Higher National Diploma awards

3.3 Target groups

Many schools already offer vocational courses to pupils in S3, 4, 5 and/or 6. These are often delivered in partnership with a college, private training provider or employer. Where these vocational courses are delivered to S3 and S4 pupils they often replace one Standard Grade.

The target audience for this qualification would therefore be:

♦ S3 and S4 schools pupils who will undertake the qualification as part of the school's vocational education programme. This is seen as the other primary target market for the qualification. For such candidates the NPA provides a good basis for progression on to any of the suite NPAs at levels 5 and 6.
♦ S5 and S6 school pupils who will undertake the qualification as a broadening of the curriculum.
♦ Candidates at colleges using the NPA within full or part-time college programmes. This is seen as one of the primary target markets for the qualification.
♦ Trainees of national programmes which prepare them to enter the workforce, such as Get Ready for Work or Training for Work.
♦ Existing employees within digital media, who wish to develop competence in certain areas. These candidates are likely to undertake individual Units and not the full Group Award.

3.4 Employment opportunities

There may be limited opportunities to gain employment as a trainee in the digital media area.

4 Access to Group Award

Access to this award will be at the discretion of the centre, however, the following provides guidance on what is considered to be knowledge and/or experience considered appropriate for entry:

It would be beneficial if candidates had the following competences:

- ♦ *Communication* skills at SCQF level 3 or equivalent
- ♦ *Numeracy* skills at SCQF level 3 or equivalent
- ♦ *Information Technology* skills at SCQF level 3 or equivalent
- ♦ *Problem Solving* skills at SCQF level 3 or equivalent

Mature candidates without formal qualifications but with appropriate industrial experience may also be considered

5 Group Award structure

The content of these Units is mainly hands-on and therefore the assessment of the Outcomes within each Unit can be delivered individually or as a small project(s) to build up the candidate's knowledge and/or skills through the SCQF level.

The National Progression Award in Digital Media Basics at SCQF level 4 has been created to match the requirements of creating digital media elements in a safe and legitimate manner whether at home or in a formal educational setting. This award should be delivered with regard to current legislation and health and safety guidelines.

It is recommended that the Units are delivered in the following logical sequence (although the centre can choose to offer the Units in a different order):

F1JY 10 Digital Media: Still Images Acquisition SCQF level 4
F1JT 10 Digital Media: Audio Acquisition SCQF level 4
F1JW 10 Digital Media: Video Acquisition SCQF level 4

5.1 Framework

This is the proposed structure of the award:

Candidates must complete all of the following mandatory Units.

Unit	Unit Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
Digital Media: Still Images Acquisition	F1JY 10	6	4
Digital Media: Audio Acquisition	F1JT 10	6	4
Digital Media: Video Acquisition	F1JW 10	6	4

5.2　Mapping information

The Units have been written so as to be fully compatible with the relevant National Occupational Standards in Digital Media:

IM2 Obtain Assets for Use in Interactive Media Products
SKS D1 – D11 Produce digital images
SKS C12 – C31 Shoot video
SKS S27 Make sound recordings

5.3　Articulation, professional recognition and credit transfer

Candidates who undertake this Award could expect to progress onto the next two levels:

NPA in Digital Media Editing SCQF 5
NPA in Digital Media Production SCQF 6

Candidates can also progress onto any of the following:

NPA in Computer Systems and Networks SCQF 5
NPA in Software Development SCQF 5
NPA in Website Enterprise SCQF 5
NPA in Digital Media Animation SCQF 5
NPA in Computers and Digital Photography SCQF 5
PC Passport SCQF 5

6　Approaches to delivery and assessment

Delivery

The National Progression Award in Digital Media Basics at SCQF level 4 has been created to match the requirements of candidates in the competences required to move into the creative industries area which includes multimedia, interactive media, design and photography. The grouping of Units within the award has been designed to meet this demand by providing an opportunity to group together a number of Units to give a coherent foundation towards using digital media which will:

♦ provide a candidate with the confidence to acquire and use digital media elements safely
♦ ensure that software tools are used effectively to carry out basic editing of digital media elements
♦ provide a candidate with additional skills by completing this short-course of study which will equip them to articulate to further studies

The individual Units can be delivered in any order, but it is suggested that the Still Images and Audio Units are completed before the Video Unit. Evening class provision could offer the three Units over one session, one evening per week.

Assessment
Assessment for each of the Units is sequential from Outcome 2 onwards — practical assessments. The assessment for Outcome 1 should be offered towards the end of the Unit, once candidates have gained the knowledge and understanding through the practical aspects of the Units.

7 General information for centres

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements**.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this Group Award should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education* (**www.sqa.org.uk**).

8 Glossary of terms

SCQF: This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at **www.scqf.org.uk**

SCQF credit points: One SCQF credit point equates to 10 hours of learning. NQ Units at SCQF levels 2–6 are worth 6 SCQF credit points, NQ Units at level 7 are worth 8 SCQF points.

SCQF levels: The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2-6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Dedicated Unit to cover Core Skills: This is a non-subject Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skill.

Embedded Core Skills: This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

Signposted Core Skills: This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie outwith automatic certification.

Qualification Design Team: The QDT works in conjunction with a Qualification Manager/Development Manager to steer the development of the National Certificate/National Progression Award from its inception/revision through to validation. The group is made up of key stakeholders representing the interests of centres, employers, universities and other relevant organisations.

Consortium-devised National Certificates/National Progression Awards are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.