

18 November 2005

To: SQA Co-coordinators (Secondary Schools  
and Colleges of Further Education)  
Directors of Education  
SCIS  
Customer Account Managers

Action by Recipient	
	Response required
✓	Note and pass on
	None — update/information only

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Dear Colleague

### **National Qualifications Update — Access 3 Social Subjects Cluster**

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member of staff responsible for Access 3 Social Subjects.

#### **Entries**

Encouragingly, entries are continuing to rise. This year 566 candidates were entered for the Cluster with 378 achieving an award.

#### **Moderation**

This was the first year the new Access 3 Social Subjects Moderation Group met and carried out moderation for the three Units of the Cluster. Twenty-one centres were selected for moderation and the vast majority of these had been found to be working to the national standard. There were many encouraging examples of candidate work which seemed to have been produced with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Possible ambiguities in the Arrangements document and NAB items led to unexpected interpretations by centres. Allowances have been made for this in this year's moderating process. Clarification will be issued to centres over the course of the coming year. Centres should ensure that they are following the guidelines as clarified. Even centres which have been successfully moderated would be advised to check that they are applying the guidelines as intended.

The Moderating Team are thanked for their hard work in carrying out moderation this year. The full report of the Senior Moderator will be available from our website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) in due course. Teachers are encouraged to read this report as it provides a wealth of information and advice to aid the successful delivery of Access 3 Social Subjects.

## **Steering Group**

Membership of the Steering Group has now reached its full capacity. SQA offers its thanks to everyone who expressed an interest in joining this Group.

The Steering Group will meet later this month to discuss and review the issues surrounding the Arrangements document and NABs that have been highlighted as a result of moderation. Centres will be notified of any intended amendments to these publications.

## **Discrete Access 3 Clusters in the major Social Subjects**

An investigation is currently underway into provision in Geography, History and Modern Studies at Access 3 level. A possible outcome is that this will result in the creation of three new Access 3 Clusters — one for each subject — to run in parallel with the existing Access 3 Social Subjects Cluster. If you have an interest in this area and would like to offer any opinions, suggestions or assistance, please contact one of the following:

Geography	Lisa Allan	<a href="mailto:allanl@barrhead.e-renfrew.sch.uk">allanl@barrhead.e-renfrew.sch.uk</a>
History	Iain Martin	<a href="mailto:martini@st-ninians.e-renfrew.sch.uk">martini@st-ninians.e-renfrew.sch.uk</a>
Modern Studies	Lesley Graham	<a href="mailto:grahaml@woodfarm.e-renfrew.sch.uk">grahaml@woodfarm.e-renfrew.sch.uk</a>

I hope you find the information contained in this update helpful. If you have any issues arising with the delivering of Access 3 Social Subjects, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Veronica Curran  
Qualifications Officer