

19 December 2005

To: SQA Co-ordinator
CAMs
Local Education Authorities
Directors of Education
All Centres
HMIE

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

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Dear Colleague

Subject Update — Business Education

The contents of this letter should be passed to the members of staff responsible for Business Education subjects.

General information and advice

Assessment Panel

The Autumn meeting of the NQ Business Education Assessment Panel took place on Wednesday 26 October 2005.

Standard Grade — Accounting & Finance, Administration, Business Management

Practical Abilities Projects 2006

Practical Abilities Projects have now been distributed to all centres as per the distribution model used for the 2005 projects. The number of projects allocated to centres was based on certificated numbers for Diet 2005. Extra copies are available to download via SQA's secure website. Any problems or requests for a large number of copies will be handled by the Customer Contact Centre (0845 279 1000).

Understanding Standards

All staff are encouraged to make use of this valuable resource (www.understandingstandards.org.uk) which covers the following subjects/levels:

- ◆ Administration Higher
- ◆ Business Management Higher (recently updated)

New subjects and levels will be introduced during 2006 including:

- ◆ Accounting Higher
- ◆ Administration Intermediate 2
- ◆ Business Management Intermediate 2

Principal Assessors' Reports and Senior Moderators' Reports

Principal Assessors' Reports for Diet 2005 examinations and Senior Moderators' Reports for 2005 are now available on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) and can be found in each of the subject pages. All centres are reminded of the importance of these reports and the fact that particular issues which have been identified will apply in the current session.

Appeals

All centres are reminded of the subject specific appeals advice previously stated in the Subject Update Letter dated 14 January 2005. This correspondence is also available on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

This is in addition to the generic advice previously issued: *Estimates, Absentees and External Assessment Appeals: guidance on evidence requirements BA0992/3, April 2004*.

All centres should also note that where SQA past papers are used to construct a prelim, questions must be carefully selected from a **minimum of three** papers, preferably adapted and must be checked to ensure that they meet the current standard of the external examination paper.

A well-designed commercially-produced question paper can, as long as it is used in an appropriate manner, provide valid and reliable evidence for estimates of a candidate's expected performance in a Course assessment. It can also provide full or partial evidence to support an external Assessment Appeal. The use of these question papers is both convenient to centres and acceptable to SQA — provided that our guidance on validity, reliability and security is adhered to.

Commercial question paper producers make considerable effort to meet Course requirements with regard to validity and reliability. However, SQA does not prior-moderate commercially-produced question papers, and there is no guarantee that these question papers meet all Course requirements. Centres are responsible for the validity and reliability of the assessment evidence submitted to support External Assessment Appeals, and therefore must evaluate these papers in the same way as centre-devised papers.

Only the current year's commercial papers will be accepted in their entirety for External Assessment Appeals. Because these papers and associated marking instructions find their way into the public domain, which provides candidates with opportunities for improper access to them, past papers cannot be accepted in their entirety to support External Assessment Appeals.

Further subject specific information is contained in the following Appendices:

Appendix 1 — Accounting & Finance

Appendix 2 — Administration

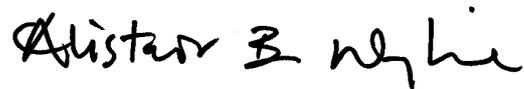
Appendix 3 — Business Management

Appendix 4 — Economics

Should you require further information about the content of this letter or any other matter relating to Business Education subjects, please contact the staff listed below:

- ◆ **Alistair Wylie — Qualifications Manager, Business Education**
0141-242 2019 or alistair.wylie@sqa.org.uk
- ◆ **Shazia Anwar — Qualifications Officer, Accounting & Finance and Business Management**
0141-242 2338 or shazia.anwar@sqa.org.uk
- ◆ **Julie Scanlan — Qualifications Officer, Administration and Economics**
0141-242 2324 or julie.scanlan@sqa.org.uk
- ◆ **Liz Sinclair — Qualifications Officer, Business Education**
0141-242 2324 or liz.sinclair@sqa.org.uk

Yours faithfully



Alistair Wylie
Qualifications Manager
Business Education

Appendix 1

Subject Update — Accounting

Accounting — Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher

Centres are advised that as of Diet 2007, all examination papers will refer to Year 1, Year 2 etc, rather than adopting specific year dates (e.g. 2005, 2006, etc).

Accounting — Advanced Higher

The review of Advanced Higher Accounting is now complete and the new Course is live for Session 2005-2006.

Centres are reminded of the transition arrangements which apply:

- Candidates who have successfully completed all component units of the old Course (in Diet 2005) can upgrade their external assessment grading in Diet 2006 (without undertaking the new units of the revised Course).
- Candidates who have been graded in the Diet 2005 external examination but who still have to complete an outstanding unit (under old Arrangements), are allowed to complete that unit in Diet 2005-2006 and thereby gain a Course award in Diet 2006 certification.

Quality Network Meeting

SQA is running a Quality Network Meeting for NQ Accounting on Friday 3 February 2006. This meeting will focus on internal assessment at Higher and Advanced Higher levels. To book a place at this meeting, please call the Customer Contact Centre (0845 279 1000) for further information.

Higher Accounting — Markers

We are currently looking to recruit markers for Higher Accounting in advance of the Diet 2006 examination. If you have current experience of delivering Higher Accounting and would like to apply to join our team of markers, please complete an application form available on the SQA website (www.sqa.org.uk) or contact Shazia Anwar, Qualifications Officer on 0141-242 2338 or shazia.anwar@sqa.org.uk for further information.

Appendix 2

Subject Update — Administration

Administration — Advanced Higher

The review of Advanced Higher Administration is well underway. Documentation, including Course Arrangements and NABs, will be published on the SQA website in Spring 2006 for implementation in Session 2006-2007. Centres who have a particular interest in delivering this qualification for the first time following the introduction of the new Higher level course this session are welcome to contact the Qualifications Manager for further information.

Administration — Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher

Centres are reminded of the transition arrangements which apply following the introduction of these new Courses:

- Candidates who have successfully completed all component units of the old Course (in Diet 2005) can upgrade their external assessment grading in Diet 2006 (without undertaking the new units of the revised Course).
- Candidates who have been graded in the Diet 2005 external examination but who still have to complete an outstanding unit (under old Arrangements), are allowed to complete that unit in Diet 2005-2006 and thereby gain a Course award in Diet 2006 certification.

Provision of electronic files — Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher levels

Electronic files have been made available to support the Specimen Question Papers for Intermediate 2 Paper 2 and Higher Administration Paper 2 and are available to download from the Subject Area for NQ Administration on the SQA website. Files are available for both PC and Apple users. A Guidance Document has also been produced and should be read before making use of the files.

Electronic files have also been provided to support NABs at Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher levels and are available to download from the SQA Secure website. Files are available for both PC and Apple users. Guidance Documents have also been produced and should be read before making use of the files.

Electronic files were made available on a pilot basis for Diet 2005 examinations. Following evaluation of this pilot, a decision has been made to extend this to all centres for Diet 2006 examinations at Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher levels. Further details will be communicated to SQA Co-ordinators in due course.

Quality Network Meeting

SQA is running a Quality Network Meeting for NQ Administration on Friday 3 March 2006. This meeting will focus on internal assessment at Higher level. To book a place at this meeting, please call the Customer Contact Centre (0845 279 1000) for further information.

Provision of prelim papers for Intermediate 2 Paper 2 and Higher Paper 2

As previously intimated by letter, presenting centres will be provided with a prelim paper for Intermediate 2 Paper 2 and Higher Paper 2 **for this year only**. These papers will be available to download, with the accompanying electronic files and instructions to teachers/lecturers, from the first week in December 2005 on the SQA Secure website. Further details will be made available to SQA Co-ordinators in due course.

Specimen Question Paper — Higher level

The Specimen Question Paper for Higher level will shortly be updated on the SQA website. This is to fully align it with work recently undertaken on Understanding Standards and to

ensure that it accurately reflects marking practice which will be adopted by the marking team from Diet 2006 onwards. It should be noted that the changes are relatively minor.

Appeals

All centres should note that for Diet 2007 appeals onwards, the use of Paper 2 past papers in their entirety for Intermediate 2 and Higher levels **will not be** acceptable. Centres may make judicious use of the Specimen Papers, Diet 2005, Diet 2006 and the SQA-supplied prelim papers (2006 only) as well as other sources (e.g. commercial papers) subject to the previously published advice for the generation of evidence for assessment appeals in constructing appropriate papers for Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 (Papers 1 and 2) and Higher (Papers 1 and 2).

Word Processing Units

Following requests from several centres to continue using Word Processing Units, from the outgoing Administration Courses, we are happy to confirm that the finish dates have been removed on the units as listed:

Word Processing 1 (D009 10)

Word Processing 2 (D010 11)

This means that centres can continue to use these Units (stand alone only) until further notice.

Markers — all levels

We are currently looking to recruit markers for Administration in advance of the Diet 2006 examinations and in anticipation of continuing growth in presentation numbers. If you have current experience of delivering Administration and would like to apply to join our team of markers, please complete an application form available on the SQA website (www.sqa.org.uk) or contact Julie Scanlan, Qualifications Officer on 0141-242 2324 or julie.scanlan@sqa.org.uk for further information.

Appendix 3

Subject Update — Business Management

Business Management — Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher

The NQ Review in Business Management is now complete for Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher and due for implementation in Session 2006-2007.

Documentation relating to the new Courses is now available on the SQA website. This includes Arrangement Documents, Course Assessment Packs (including a Course Assessment Specification and Specimen Question Paper for each level) and National Assessment Bank Assessments (initially one per level). Note that the NABs must be accessed via the SQA Secure site.

Launch seminars took place in 9 locations across Scotland during November 2005.

The following transition arrangements will be in force during Session 2006-2007 for Business Management at Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher levels:

- Candidates who have successfully completed all component units of the old Course (in Diet 2006) can upgrade their external assessment grading in Diet 2007 (without undertaking the new units of the revised Course).
- Candidates who have been graded in the Diet 2006 external examination but who still have to complete an outstanding unit (under old Arrangements), are allowed to complete that unit in Diet 2006-2007 and thereby gain a Course award in Diet 2007 certification.
- Note: all candidates who fall into either of the above categories in relation to Advanced Higher will be required to undertake the Business Report which is subject to external marking and contributes to the external assessment.

Higher Business Management — Markers

We are currently looking to recruit markers for Higher Business Management in advance of the Diet 2006 examination and in anticipation of continuing growth in presentation numbers. If you have current experience of delivering Higher Business Management and would like to apply to join our team of markers, please complete an application form available on the SQA website (www.sqa.org.uk) or contact Shazia Anwar, Qualifications Officer on 0141-242 2338 or shazia.anwar@sqa.org.uk for further information.

Appendix 4

Subject Update — Economics

Economics — Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher

The NQ Review in Economics is now complete for Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher implemented this session.

Intermediate 1 Economics is currently under review. Documentation, including Course Arrangements and NABs, will be published on the SQA website in Spring 2006 for implementation in Session 2006-2007.

Economics — Standard Grade

All centres presenting Standard Grade are asked to note the following mark allocations when constructing prelims or gathering evidence for external assessment appeals. The marks allocated in the External Assessment from this session onwards will no longer vary from year to year.

Level	MARK ALLOCATIONS	
	Knowledge & Understanding	Enquiry Skills
Foundation	30	45
General	32	44
Credit	32	44