

17 November 2005

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

**For the attention of all staff responsible for the
delivery of National Qualifications in Contemporary
Social Studies**

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

Contact Name: Veronica Curran at Glasgow
Direct Line: 0141-242 2332
E-mail: veronica.curran@sqa.org.uk

Dear Colleague

National Qualifications Update — Contemporary Social Studies

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member of staff responsible for Contemporary Social Studies.

Examination Diet 2005

The Principal Assessor, Examining Team and Markers are warmly thanked for continuing to deliver a successful diet. The full report of the Principal Assessor will be available from our website (www.sqa.org.uk) by the end of November. Teachers are encouraged to read this report as it provides a wealth of information and advice to aid the successful delivery of CSS.

There was a welcome rise, albeit marginally, in candidate entries for this year's examination.

The knowledge and understanding element continues to be more challenging for candidates than the evaluating element. The gap between these two elements was wider than ever this year. It appears to be that many candidates have difficulty in retaining knowledge over a period of time. In order to try to address this imbalance, there will be more use of recognition or multiple choice questions in the Foundation examination paper, thus testing knowledge by recognition as well as by recall. This will come into effect for the 2006 Foundation examination paper.

Investigating element

Centres are reminded that the focus of this element should be on the **process** of investigating, rather than the final report, as this is where the candidate has to demonstrate competence — undue weighting should not be given to the finalised report. The Examining Team and the subject Steering Group recognise the challenges posed in trying to encourage candidates to

complete this element. Consequently the Steering Group have discussed ways to attempt to make this element more manageable. It was agreed that if any changes were to be made then centres would be consulted. A final decision has yet to be made on whether or not to amend the Arrangements document. Centres will be notified of any decision made in due course.

I hope you find the information contained in this update helpful. If you have any issues arising with the delivery of CSS, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Veronica Curran". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V'.

Veronica Curran
Qualifications Officer