

Our ref: TS/Care

22 November 2007

To: SQA Co-ordinator (secondary schools, FE colleges)
Directors of Education
SCIS
Customer Account Managers

**For the attention of all staff responsible for the
delivery of National Qualifications in Care**

Action by Recipient
Response required
✓ Note and pass on
Note — update/information only

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications in Care

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member of staff responsible for National Qualifications in Care.

Diet 2007

Results for all Care Courses were somewhat mixed, with those for Care Intermediate 1 being very good. Higher Care results continue to be disappointing although there was a 4% increase in the pre-appeals pass rate. The project assessed Courses results continue to 'see-saw' with the *Mental Health Care* and *Care Issues for Society: Childcare* results showing excellent improvement, whereas *Health and Safety in Care Settings* and *Care Issues for Society: Older People* showing a decrease. *Care Practice* showed a slight increase but remains fairly stable. For the question paper, examinations evidence would indicate that many candidates receive little or no instruction on examination technique.

The Principal Assessor reports for diet 2007 can now be found on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk). These include:

- ◆ Principal Assessor report Care Intermediate 1
- ◆ Principal Assessor report Care Intermediate 2
- ◆ Principal Assessor report Care Higher
- ◆ Principal Assessor report Care Issues for Society Intermediate 2
- ◆ Principal Assessor report Care Practice Higher
- ◆ Principal Assessor report Health and Safety in Care Settings Intermediate 2

- ◆ Principal Assessor report Mental Health Care Higher

Appeals

The procedures for stage 1 and stage 2 appeals were completed in September and October 2006. Colleagues are requested to follow the guidance set out in the following documents prior to submitting appeals:

- ◆ *The Appeals Process: a guide for centres* (AA0690/3, June 2002)
- ◆ *Estimates, Absentees and Assessment Appeals: Guidance on Evidence Requirements* (BA0992, June 2007)

Both documents can be downloaded from SQA's website.

The most commonly found problems in evidence submitted for appeals this year were:

- ◆ wrong or incomplete evidence
- ◆ prelims which do not replicate the format of the final exam
- ◆ inconsistencies in marking
- ◆ leniency in applying marks and grades
- ◆ lack of evaluative evidence

All of the above issues have been reported in previous update letters and PA reports, however, similar problems were replicated in 2007. We would also take this opportunity to remind staff that ½ marks are not acceptable.

Centres should note that the above problems may disadvantage candidates and staff are encouraged to read the various Principal Assessor reports for Care.

The document noted above — *Estimates, Absentees and Assessment Appeals: Guidance on Evidence Requirements* — has undergone revision and has been posted on SQA's website. The revised version clarifies what evidence is required when submitting an appeal for question paper based Courses and states:

The evidence for the question paper could include:

- ◆ a prelim which covers all Units and replicates the standard, format, duration and security of SQA's question paper. This could support an appeal for Grades A, B and C, and would be the most convincing evidence for an appeal for Grade A.
- ◆ a prelim which covers all Units and is split into parts and the two parts have been separated by a period of time rather than being taken on one occasion. Centres should be aware that the level of demand is less than the Course assessment. The level of demand can be increased in a number of ways such as by raising the cut-off scores or by increasing the level of challenge of the prelim. This could support an appeal for Grades A, B and C
- ◆ a prelim which covers a minimum of two Units of the Course plus supporting evidence, such as a high scoring NAB, for the third Unit would support an appeal for a Grade C (and possibly Grade B), but not for a Grade A.

Marking instructions

The question papers and finalised marking instructions for diet 2007 Course assessments are posted on the Care web page.

NQ Health and Social Care

2005-2007 were very busy years for developments in Care — most of them driven by the sector. Thanks must go to the large number of lecturers and teachers who assisted in this process — and to the centres who allowed their staff to participate. To date all has gone well. Unfortunately some of the revised NABs have not been available as quickly as we would have liked. This has been due mainly to the huge demand on the NAB Team's time because of the development of a large number of new Group Awards and Skills for Work Courses and the amount of NABs and ASPs generated by this increase.

Revision of Care Courses

All centres are now delivering the revised Care Courses. The Courses at Intermediate 1 and 2 have been brought in line with the requirements set for SCQF levels 4 and 5 respectively. At Intermediate 2 there is a greater emphasis on theory and on the application of these theories to care practice. It is hoped that candidates completing Intermediate 2 will now be better prepared for attempting the Higher Course as well as allowing candidates who start out on the Higher Course to change to Intermediate 2 should they find the former too challenging.

Specimen question papers, including marking information, and Course assessment specifications are posted on the Care page of SQA's website. These will give staff a clear indication of how the revised exams will look, what is expected in candidate responses and how prelims should be set.

National Certificate in Health and Social Care (Higher)

This new award was warmly welcomed by lecturers at the launch seminar and a number of centres are implementing it this session.

National Certificate in Child, Health and Social Care (Intermediate 2)

A National Certificate at Intermediate 2 is currently being developed. This will cover Childcare and Health and Social Care with the opportunity to go down either route or to keep the award generic. Because of the revisions undertaken in respect of the National Certificates at Higher level in both Childcare and Health and Social Care further revisions are able to be kept to a minimum thus allowing this award to be available for implementation in August 2008.

Skills for Work

Uptake of the new Skills for Work Health and Social Care at Higher is encouraging and those delivering it appear very enthusiastic. SQA is currently in

discussions with UCAS as regards the number of points it will attract in the UCAS scale. As the assessment of this Course is entirely undertaken through internal assessment, the demands of Unit assessment are key in determining the UCAS position.

SQA are offering a high level of support for those centres implementing this Course during this session. Centres have already been offered development visits and each centre will receive two verification visits which will lean as much towards support as to verifying assessments. A Support Network meeting has also been arranged for 6 November. Notification of this meeting has been circulated to all centres.

Project-based National Courses

As part of the development of the new National Certificate a number of Units within these Courses have been revised. Centres are reminded that new or old Units may be used for this year only. A letter detailing changes and conditions of use was distributed to centres in May of this year. The relevant information from that letter is attached as an appendix.

Please note: where the revised versions of Units are being used, the revised Project specifications should also be used. These will be posted on the Care web page later this year.

Ex6 forms

Staff submitting project evidence for PBNCs are asked to note that the EX6 forms are for use by **SQA markers only** and that centre estimates should **not** be entered on these forms. Marker checklists for each PBNC are available from SQA's website and these should accompany the candidate evidence with the Internal Assessor's estimated marks.

Health and Safety in Care Settings (Intermediate 2)

Two colleges are participating in a pilot using social software in the completion of the project for this Course. The programmes use wikis and blogs and allow tutors and examiners to assess the candidates' contributions to group work in a more reliable way than the traditional paper method. It is hoped that we will be able to roll this out to all centres delivering this Course in session 2008/09.

Assessment Panel

The Assessment Panel continues to meet twice a year to look at issues arising in the assessment of Care Units and Courses. Colleagues are free to feed issues arising in their subject to the Panel either directly through panel members or via SQA officers.

Being an SQA Marker

If you are interested in becoming a Marker for any of the Care or Early Education and Childcare Courses, please e-mail markers@sqa.org.uk or call our Marker

Helpline (0131-561 6825) and we will send a form to you. To become a Marker, we normally ask that you are in your third year of teaching the Course or have been teaching it within the past three years. Obviously this cannot be the case for the new Courses but experience in these areas will be considered. We welcome applications throughout the year and, where a suitable vacancy exists, we may be able to offer an appointment for this year. I would like to point out that all Care Courses are centrally marked — this entails the Marker marking scripts over one extended period in the same venue. We have had a number of examples recently where the results in centres have improved dramatically after a member of staff joined the marking team.

I hope that you find the above information useful. If you would like to discuss any matter in more detail, please do not hesitate to telephone me on 0845 213 5502, or e-mail: tom.stannage@sqa.org.uk.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Stannage". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tom Stannage
Qualifications Manager
NQ Social Sciences and Care

Appendix

The development of the National Certificate in Health and Social Care led to the revision of several of the Units that contribute to the project-assessed National Courses in Care. The following information gives details of these revisions. Course codes have not been changed.

Care Practice (Higher) C01F 12

The following Units have been revised and re-coded as follows:

Old code	New code	Unit title	Credit
D8XV 12	F1P0 12	<i>Practical Skills for Carers (Higher)</i>	2 Credits (80 hours)
D06L 12	F1NY 12	<i>Working as a Team in a Care Setting (Higher)</i>	1 Credit (40 hours)

The current versions of these Units have a finish date of 31 July 2008. They are therefore available for 2007/08 and a combination of current and revised versions may contribute to the Course for one year only.

Care Issues for Society: Older People (Intermediate 2) C06H 11

The following Units have been revised and re-coded as follows:

Old code	New code	Unit title	Credit
D11H 11	F 1P4 11	<i>Mental Health Issues: An Introduction (Intermediate 2)</i>	1 credit (40 hours)
D665 11	F 1P5 11	<i>Understanding the Needs of the Older Person (Intermediate 2)</i>	1 credit (40 hours)

The current versions of these Units have a finish date of 31 July 2008. They are therefore available for 2007/08 and a combination of current and revised versions may contribute to the Course for one year only.

Care Issues for Society: Childcare (Intermediate 2) C06F 11

Parenting (Intermediate 2) DM86 11 replaces *Parenting Today* (Intermediate 2) D10P 11

Parenting Today has a finish date of 31 July 2008 and may continue to contribute to the Course for one year only.

Health and Safety in Care Settings (Intermediate 2) C01E 11

Promoting Healthy Eating in a Care Setting (Intermediate 2) D10S 11 is replaced by *Healthy Eating in a Care Setting* (Intermediate 2) F1P1 11.

Safety in a Care Environment (Intermediate 2) D668 11 is replaced by *Maintaining Safety in a Care Setting* (Intermediate 2) F1P2 11.

Promoting Healthy Eating in a Care Setting and *Safety in a Care Environment* have a finish date of 31 July 2008 and may continue to contribute to the Course for one year only.

All of the above Units are allocated 1 Credit (40 hours).

Note: For session 2007/08 there is no restriction as to which Units, old or revised, should be delivered as part of the Course. While some streamlining of content has taken place, the majority of revisions reflect changes in care legislation and care practice and so a combination of current and revised Units will be acceptable for one year only. **Centres should take care not to enter candidates for both versions of any of the Units.**