

Our ref: TS/EE&C

September 2005

To: SQA Coordinator (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 Early Education and Childcare**

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

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications in Early Education and Childcare

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member of staff responsible for National Qualifications in Early Education and Childcare

Diet 2005

Overall the results for Higher Early Years Care and Education was on a par with last year's and, while there were some that were disappointing, there were also some that were excellent. The Principal Assessor Report for Diet 2005 can now be found on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

Appeals

The procedures for Early Years Care and Education appeals have just been completed. 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 and Assessment Appeals: Guidance on generating evidence* (A0992/2, April 2004)

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.
- ◆ Submitting evidence which does not match the centre estimate

- ◆ Inconsistencies in marking.
- ◆ Leniency in applying marks and grades.

All of the above issues were reported in the 2004 update letter, however, similar problems were replicated in 2005. In addition, examiners were disappointed with the quality of the presentation of evidence from some centres. This related to uncoordinated evidence such as several pieces of evidence for each candidate with no clear or direct link to the assessment instrument.

Centres should note that the above problems may disadvantage candidates and staff are encouraged to read the Principal Assessor's Report.

Marking Instructions

The finalised marking instructions for the Diet 2005 Course assessment is posted on the Early Education and Childcare web page. It is hoped that this will be of benefit to staff when preparing a prelim paper or when submitting evidence in the event of making appeals.

National Certificate Group Award: Early Education and Childcare

The development of the new NC Group Award in Early Education and Childcare is now complete and indications are that a large number of centres will enter candidates for this new award in session 2005 – 2006. Unit and Course codes and specifications are all posted on the Early Education and Childcare page of SQA's website and NABs for all Units are on the SQA secure site. SQA coordinators in centres have the passwords which allow access to the secure site.

Early Years Care and Education (Higher)

Please note that the above **Course** has been revised as part of the development of the new National Certificate **Group Award** in Early Education and Childcare. New Courses in Early Education and Childcare (Higher) and Play in Early Education and Childcare (Higher) were implemented in August 2005 as follows:

Early Education and Childcare (Higher) consists of the following three mandatory Units:

- DM3X 12 Child Development: Birth to 12 years (Higher)
- DM3Y 12 Developmental Theory in Early Education and Childcare (Higher)
- DM40 12 Holistic Approaches to Child Health (Higher)

Play in Early Education and Childcare (Higher) consists of the following two mandatory Units:

- DM41 12 Play in Early Education and Childcare (Higher) – 1 credit
- DM42 12 Play in Practice (Higher) – 2 credits

Revised Arrangements Documents, Specimen Question Papers and National Assessment Bank items are available on the SQA web-site. The original version of *Holistic Approaches to Child Health* (D75A 12) can substitute for the revised version (DM40 12) in the revised

Course. It should be noted however that the Course assessment for the revised Course has a different structure from the earlier version.

Dual Running of the Current and Revised Courses for 2005 – 2006

Both the old (Early Years Care and Education) and the revised Course Early Education and Childcare will be available in Session 2005/06. **Thereafter only the revised Course will be available.** There are a number of risks involved in dual running for both centres and for SQA. Centres are asked to ensure that candidates are entered for the correct Course when entries are made later this year for Diet 2006.

Early Education and Childcare Intermediate 2

We have developed a number of new Units which could contribute to a National Certificate Group Award at Intermediate 2 and would be interested to find out if this is a development that the sector would welcome. Your comments on this would be most helpful.

Skills for Work

Courses at Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2 in Early Education and Childcare have been developed as part of this Scottish Executive initiative. This is part of the wider *A Curriculum for Excellence* and is initially aimed at S3/S4 school students as part of their middle school curriculum. Early Education and Childcare has been included in Phase 1 of this pilot along with Financial Services, Sport and Leisure and Construction.

The Early Education and Childcare Courses are comprised of three mandatory Units and a choice of one from three optional Units. On successful completion of four Units candidates achieve an ungraded Course award - there is no external Course assessment. Twenty-five centres are involved in the pilot and those include local authority/college partnerships and a few local authority and independent schools.

Learning and Teaching support materials have been developed by the Scottish Further Education Unit and all centres involved in this pilot phase will be supported by an SQA Development Officer.

New Units

A series of new Units entitled *Children's Development and Learning* have been developed at Intermediate 1. There are four Units in the series and each has a 0.5 credit value. They enable candidates to examine the role and responsibilities of the parent in meeting the needs of children from birth to five years. The Units also require candidates to describe the qualities and skills required in providing for the care, development and learning of children aged 0-5.

The Units are suitable for parents, those intending to become parents and other candidates wishing to extend their knowledge of the issues surrounding the parenting of young children.

These will become available for use as from January and will be posted on the website in due course.

Assessment Panel

The remit and make-up of the Care Assessment Panel has been reviewed with the result that there are now more representatives on this 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.

Becoming a Marker

The number of entries for the Higher Early Years Care and Education Course has increased every year since its inception and the marking team is finding it harder to complete marking on time. If you are interested in becoming a marker for the revised version of this Course or for the new PBNC Play in Early Education and Childcare, an application form can be downloaded from SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk). Alternatively, please contact us on 0131-561 6825 and we will send a form to you. To become a Marker, we normally ask that you have taught the Course for at least three, years, preferably within the past three years – obviously this cannot be the case for these new Courses but your experience in this subject area will be relevant. We welcome applications throughout the year and, where a suitable vacancy exists, we may be able to offer an appointment for this year. These 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. The experience provides excellent personal and professional development

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 0141-242 2343, or e-mail me at tom.stannage@sqa.org.uk

Yours faithfully



Tom Stannage
Qualifications Manager
NQ Social Subjects