

December 2009

To: SQA Co-ordinator (secondary schools, FE colleges)
Directors of Education
SCIS
Business Development 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
Note — update/information only

Contact: Mary Hainey at Glasgow
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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 2009

The External Assessment reports, formerly known as the Principal Assessor reports, for diet 2009 can now be found on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk). These include:

- ◆ External Assessment Report Higher Early Education and Childcare
- ◆ External Assessment Report Higher Play in Early Education and Childcare
- ◆ Internal Assessment Report SfW: Early Education and Childcare

Appeals

The procedures for Stage 1 and 2 Appeals were completed during September. Colleagues are requested to follow the guidance set out in the following documents prior to submitting Appeals:

- ◆ *Estimates and Assessment Appeals: Guidance on generating evidence* (BA5212, November 2009)

The document named above is the most recent update and is now available on our website. In particular, the document clarifies subject-specific requirements as well as guidance on the general principles for generating Estimates and submitting Appeals evidence.

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 External Assessment reports; however, similar problems were replicated in 2009. We would also take this opportunity to remind teachers/lecturers that ½ marks are not acceptable.

It is important to emphasise the clarity required when identifying sources. Centres must ensure that details of the sources of each prelim question are included with Appeals evidence. For example: Question 2 – SQA QP 2007 – Paper 1 or Section 1.

Centres should note that the above problems will disadvantage candidates and staff are encouraged to read the External Assessment reports.

Marking instructions

The question papers and finalised marking instructions for diet 2009 Course assessments are posted on the NQ Care page of SQA's website.

Play in Early Education and Childcare

This is the fourth year of this Project Assessed Course and overall candidates appear to have been well prepared and given appropriate time to carry out the projects. The External Assessment report provides clear advice to centres to aid in the preparation of future candidates.

It is SQA's policy to review qualifications on a regular basis and as a result of feedback from centres, it was agreed to make minor amendments to the Project Assessment. We are certain that the revisions are in the best interests of both candidates and teachers/lecturers, as well as the subject. The revised specification will be published later this month and clarifies what the delivery and assessment requirements are for this Course.

A new case study has been added to replace the 'Jack' scenario. This will still cover the age range 3-5 years.

An SQA Academy event is being held on 1 February 2010 and will be for all Project-based assessed Courses. This will give teachers/lecturers an opportunity

to discuss the requirements of the Courses, changes to Play in Early Education and Childcare (Higher) and Care Practice (Higher), internal marking and estimates, and advice on submitting evidence for external assessment. Full details of all events can be found on the Scotland's Colleges website (www.scotlandscolleges.ac.uk).

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

The National Certificate at Intermediate 2 has now entered its second year and is proving to be a popular choice for colleges. The NC covers Childcare, Health Care and Social Care with the opportunity for lecturers and/or candidates to choose either the Childcare or Health and Social Care route, or to keep the award generic. It would appear this Award meets the requirements of the Care sectors. Again, thanks must go to all those who assisted with this development and particularly to those colleges who released staff to form the Qualifications Development Team.

PDA in Education Support Assistance (SCQF level 6)

The revised PDA in Education Support Assistance was implemented in August 2009. This Award replaces the PDA for Classroom Assistants and the PDA for Support for Learning Assistants. Full details of the background and content of the Award can be found in the Arrangements document which can be accessed from the PDA Education Support Assistance page of SQA's website:

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/36563.html>

A launch event was held on Monday 26 October 2009 in the Stirling Management Centre. The Qualifications Manager with responsibility for this Award is now Mary Black, and she can be contacted on tel: 0845 213 5451 or e-mail: mary.black@sqa.org.uk.

Assessment Panel

The Assessment Panel continues to meet annually 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

If you are interested in becoming a Marker in Early Education and Childcare, please visit the Appointee Management section of SQA's website or call our Marker Helpline (tel: 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. We welcome applications throughout the year and, where a suitable vacancy exists, we may be able to offer an appointment for this year. The Philosophy Courses are centrally marked — this entails the Marker marking scripts over one extended period in the same venue. In a number of subject areas we have had recent examples where the results in centres have improved dramatically after a member of staff joined the marking team. The experience of marking helps to

increase the awareness of the demands of Course assessment and is proven to be excellent professional and personal 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 0845 213 5502, or e-mail me at mary.hailey@sqa.org.uk

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Hailey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping tail.

Mary Hailey
Qualifications Manager
NQ Social Sciences and Care