

Ref: H Hist Review 2009

28 February 2009

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

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	Note — update/information only

Contact: Larry Cheyne
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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications in History — Update on changes to Higher

Arrangements document

The revised Arrangements document was posted on the History subject page of SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) in January 2009.

Specimen question papers

Specimen question papers for the revised Course, along with the Course Assessment Specifications, will be posted on SQA's website in June.

National Assessment Bank

Three versions of NABs are being produced for Paper 1 and Paper 2. The Paper 1 NABs contain items on all contexts within the British and the European and World Units, along with detailed marking instructions. These will be available by autumn 2009.

Launch events

SQA will hold a series of events to launch the revisions in November 2009. The format will include formal presentations on the changes to Paper 2 and to Paper 1, along with workshops which will include assessment exemplars.

SQA will send out formal invitations to centres early in the new session, once venues and other arrangements are confirmed.

Two-year Higher

A number of centres teach the Higher as a two-year Course. SQA policy is to avoid dual running of Courses. Hence such centres should embark on the revised Course in summer 2009. Unit assessments should be done using the new NABs.

Articulation with Intermediate

As intimated in the update of November 2008, the Intermediate 2 Course has been amended so that 'Cradle to Grave' and 'Campaigning for Change' are no longer mutually exclusive. The latter has sufficient content overlap with the new Higher topic, 'the Impact of the Great War', to act as a safety net until fuller revisions take place as part of the wider review of qualifications in the light of the Curriculum for Excellence development. Courses at Intermediate 1 and Access 3 have been amended in line. These changes are in place for the 2010 diet, so centres which so choose can use Intermediate 2 as a preparation for Higher.

Marking of Paper 1

SQA has been investigating the use of a system similar to that used for the Extended Essay in 2007 and after; we used a sample of centres to trial the proposals and as sounding boards. We did a similar exercise prior to the launch of the Extended Essay system within the examination team, with the aim of stretching the range of marks used; hence candidates benefited from those changes or, at least, were no worse off. We expect similar results with Paper 1. In the meantime centres should continue to use the existing system of marking to generate estimates and appeals evidence, as intimated in the November update.

We will launch the Paper 1 revised essay marking system to the whole profession at the launches of the new Higher in November, with exemplars and comment as appropriate. That way all centres will have the same training and opportunity. We expect estimates etc for 2010 to be generated using this system.

Learning and Teaching Materials

LTScotland has commissioned a set of resources for each of the Paper 2 Scottish topics. Further information on these and other resource provision should be addressed to Esther Cairney (tel: 0141 282 5106; e-mail: e.cairney@ltscotland.org.uk).

If you wish further clarification of any points in this letter, please contact either Duncan Cox (tel: 0845 213 5498; tel: duncan.cox@sqa.org.uk) or myself at the above address.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry Cheyne". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Larry Cheyne
Qualifications Manager