

15 December 2003

To: SQA Co-ordinator
Secondary Schools and FE Colleges

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

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications Update — Personal & Social Education

This briefing note is intended to offer practical advice and support on the issues being raised by centre staff with SQA, and should be distributed to those staff responsible for Personal & Social Education.

1 National Qualifications Review

The recommendations of the National Qualifications Review of Personal and Social Education have been presented to the Scottish Executive and are currently awaiting Ministerial approval. The outcomes of this process will determine whether or not qualifications in PSE will continue in their current form, or alternatively what form of qualification(s) may replace them.

Centres will be informed of the Minister's decision and the implications for Courses in PSE by a letter to be distributed in early 2004, which will also be made available on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

2 Principal Assessor and Senior Moderator Reports

SQA would like to encourage all centre staff responsible for PSE to read the Principal Assessor and Senior Moderator Reports for Session 2002/03 and the corresponding examination diet. These reports contain detailed and useful advice and information pertaining to candidate performance, guidance for centres and specific issues relating to individual examination questions and are available in the PSE subject page of SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

In particular, the following areas of advice may be of use to centres:

Principal Assessor Report — Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher

- ◆ Advice on the knowledge and understanding of the theoretical processes which underpin the Course as a whole.
- ◆ The appropriate presentation of candidates at different levels.
- ◆ Best practice in preparing candidates for the examination.

- ◆ The construction of prelim papers.
- ◆ The importance of using timescales in action planning.

Senior Moderator Reports

- ◆ Links between self evaluation and planning where targets are set.
- ◆ The need for an appreciation of what constitutes 'negotiation' and how it can be evidenced.

3 Folios and Personal Statements

The Specification for the Folio of Evidence 2003/2004 has been available since November of this year. All centres were notified of this by letter and were invited to request the number of copies required for candidates being presented this session.

The Personal Statement will be issued to presenting centres in January 2004. This will be accompanied by Marking Instructions and also the document '*Instructions to Centres on Visiting Moderation for Course Assessment in Personal and Social Education*'.

4 Moderation

Courses and Units in PSE will be subject to Visiting Moderation. Course Moderation will take place between 22 March and 14 May 2004.

Freestanding PSD Units (previously National Certificate Modules) will also be subject to Visiting Moderation on their completion.

I hope that the notes above and the materials attached are of help to you. Please note that last year's update letter is also still available on the PSE page of the SQA website. This letter contains information which may be useful to centres offering PSE for the first time. If you have any queries about these or any other issues relating to Personal & Social Education please contact me at the details given above.

Yours faithfully



Qualifications Manager
Social Subjects