

26 November 2004

To: SQA Co-ordinators (Secondary Schools
and Colleges of Further Education)
Directors of Education
SCIS
Customer Account Managers

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

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

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications Update — Politics

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member(s) of staff responsible for Politics.

The Principal Assessor and Senior Moderator reports for the 2004 diet can now be found in full on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

Diet 2004

Entries rose slightly for Higher Politics, but elsewhere were disappointing. There were no candidates for the external examination at any other level. Of concern is the high drop-out rate, particularly at Higher but also at Intermediate 2. One side effect of the high drop-out rate at Higher is the relatively high pass rate (88.4%, pre-appeal), as those candidates who do sit the final examination are both able and well-motivated.

Central moderation activity covered a sample of schools and colleges reflecting a balance over the country. All centres were accepted, with favourable comment made on the performance of the school candidates especially.

National Qualifications Review

A revised Course in Politics will be available at Higher from session 2006-7 onwards. Revised Units will be available at Higher and Intermediate 2. Centres will be advised on the final dates for the withdrawal of existing qualifications at Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Advanced Higher.

Following on the National Qualifications Review Investigation in Politics, published in October 2003, a Development Officer has been appointed to lead and manage the Review. Two Subject Advisory Group (SAG) meetings have been held as have considerable consultations with individual centres. As a result of the early discussions, consensus was reached on a number of issues:

- ◆ There will be three mandatory Units in the Higher Course
- ◆ Focus of the Units will be:
 - Political Theory
 - Political Structures
 - Political Behaviour
- ◆ Clearer specification of content/context was required
- ◆ The comparative element should be maintained as a distinguishing feature of Higher Politics, but not necessarily at Intermediate 2

The following stages in the Review have been completed:

- ◆ Draft specifications have been agreed for Higher Course and Units
- ◆ Outline proposals for Units at Intermediate 2 have been developed

Discussions have also begun on the format of both internal and external assessment. These and other discussions on the Course and Unit descriptors will be continued at a third SAG meeting in December. The Review of Politics has now reached a similar stage of development as the other subjects which are being implemented in 2006/07.

Contacts

For National Qualifications in Politics (and Modern Studies, Contemporary Social Studies, Access 3 Social Subjects and History), contacts are:

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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 contact us.

Yours faithfully



Larry Cheyne
Qualifications Manager