

17 November 2005

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

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 of staff responsible for Politics.

#### **Examination Diet 2005**

Entries continue to rise for the Higher Politics Course, although there are still a number of candidates dropping-out and not completing the Course. There were no entries for the Courses at Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 or Advanced Higher. Encouragingly, the number of entries from schools had also risen — almost 50% of this year's cohort had also sat Higher Modern Studies in 2004, which may have had a favourable impact on the overall pass rate as these candidates are generally well prepared for skills-based questions.

The full report of the Principal Assessor is posted on our website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

There were 16 centres selected for moderation this year with candidates performing well at Higher level, with a good display of knowledge and understanding evident in their responses. Candidate responses were consistently good to above average.

The full report of the Senior Moderator will be available from our website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) in due course.

#### **National Qualifications Review**

The new Arrangements for the Politics Course at Higher and the Units at Intermediate 2 will be available from the Politics subject page of our website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) by the end of November. The existing Courses will be examined for the last time in 2006; thereafter existing Courses at Intermediate 1 and 2 and at Advanced Higher will be discontinued. Existing Units for all levels will remain current until 31 July 2007.

The first examination at Higher under the new Arrangements will take place in summer 2007. There will be no dual running of the examination or the Course. In terms of Unit passes this means:

- ◆ candidates who have completed any Units of the existing Higher Course can contribute these to awards in the new Course
- ◆ centres should give candidates who have passed the existing external examination the opportunity to pass any existing outstanding Unit(s) in session 2006/07

For centres beginning a two-year Course at Higher this session, there is a summary of the content of the new Course and Units on the Politics subject page of our website. For the convenience of centres the new Intermediate 2 Unit descriptors are summarised there also.

#### **Launch Seminar — 29 November 2005**

The new Arrangements, along with supporting documentation including the Course Assessment Specification, Unit Descriptors, new National Assessment Bank items and a Specimen Question Paper, will be launched formally at a seminar to be held at SFEU in Stirling on 29 November. This will include workshops on assessing the new Course. An update on new learning and teaching materials will also be given. If you are interested in attending this seminar please contact Lianne Wilson, events co-ordinator, on 0141-242 2085, or e-mail: [lianne.wilson@sqa.org.uk](mailto:lianne.wilson@sqa.org.uk).

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 me or Veronica Curran on 0141-242 2332 or e-mail: [veronica.curran@sqa.org.uk](mailto:veronica.curran@sqa.org.uk).

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Cheyne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'L' and 'C'.

Larry Cheyne  
Qualifications Manager