



National Qualifications Support Team Psychology and Sociology

Action grid from meeting held on 3 November 2014

Ref.	Agenda/minute title	Notes of discussion/action agreed	Action	Date
1	Welcome and introductions	Members were welcomed to the meeting and introductions made.		
2	Roles and remit of NQST confidentiality	A short presentation was delivered by Qualifications Manager Mary Hainey (MH) outlining the roles and remit of NQST members. Members were informed of the remit of the group and that much of the discussion would take place online. Members were encouraged to make use of the NQST Quickr place — a dedicated secure online forum for this team.		
3	NQST Quickr place demonstration	Qualifications Officer Erin McCabe (EMcC) delivered a short demonstration of the Quickr system — a dedicated secure online forum for this team.		
4	Understanding Standards update	<p>MH delivered a short presentation detailing plans for the quality assurance of the new National Qualifications.</p> <p>EMcC confirmed that SQA was running Understanding Standards events to support practitioners in developing their understanding of the standards required for National 5 Course assessment and the application of these standards.</p> <p>Details of these events can be found on SQA's website.</p> <p>Members suggested that information regarding these events is sent to the College Development Network (CDN) for distribution.</p> <p>During the meeting members were directed to the College</p>		

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		Development Network (CDN) events page and encouraged to register for alerts.	EMcC	Nov 14
5	Subject Update letters	<p>Copies of the draft new-look CfE Subject Update letters for both Psychology and Sociology were distributed to members during the meeting.</p> <p>EMcC confirmed that the National 5 assignment assessment tasks for both Psychology and Sociology had been amended. The assessment tasks, however, remain unchanged; points had been added for clarity both in the task instructions and candidate instructions. In addition, changes had also been made to the way in which marks are allocated within the marking instructions, but overall marks for the assessment task remain unchanged.</p> <p>The Research Investigation briefs for new Higher Psychology were discussed. The new briefs are shorter and more concise than those provided for the existing Higher. This is because much of the generic detail that was provided in the existing Higher briefs now appears within the general assessment information. Additionally, candidates now receive marks for finding and referencing their own sources. These new briefs are also more open in nature in order to allow candidates to base their research on the optional topic they have studied in class.</p> <p>The majority of members confirmed that they have not yet moved over to teaching the new Highers and stated that further support materials would be helpful in aiding them to do so.</p>		
6	External Assessment Reports	<p>Copies of the draft External Assessment Reports (EARs) for both Psychology and Sociology (all levels) were distributed at the meeting.</p> <p>Where statistics within reports showed high numbers of candidates obtaining 'no award' (around 25%) members questioned whether this could be caused by candidates being entered at the wrong SCQF level by centres. Discussion revealed that centres take a range of different approaches with regard to entering candidates.</p>		

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		Members had no further comments regarding the content of these reports.		
7	National 5 and new Higher	<p>General discussion was had. It was agreed that most aspects of this agenda item had already discussed previously during the meeting.</p> <p>Members were informed that SQA Academy and the College Development Network have jointly devised a range of webinars which will focus on National 5 Psychology.</p> <p>Details can be found on the College Development Network website.</p>		
8	AOB	<p>A general discussion was held. Members discussed the placement of both Psychology and Sociology at the end of the examination diet. Some members expressed that this could be affecting results for social subjects due to the way in which some candidates study for exams; focusing on those subjects held at the start of the examination diet.</p> <p>Members suggested that SQA considers developing a National 4 level qualification for both Psychology and Sociology. MH confirmed that to her knowledge there was no intention to do so at this moment in time. She agreed to pass this information back to colleagues.</p>	MH	Nov 14