

24 January 2006

To: SQA Co-ordinator
Directors of Education
Science Panel Members
Customer Accounts Managers

**For the attention of all staff responsible for the delivery
of National Qualifications in Science (Standard Grade)**

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

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications Update — Science (Standard Grade)

This letter is the latest in a series of update letters from SQA and should be passed on to the member of staff responsible for the delivery of Standard Grade Science.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I have replaced Noël Donoghue as the Qualifications Manager and I can be contacted on the direct dial and e-mail address noted above. Paula McLeod has replaced Jayne Terzza as Qualifications Officer and can be contacted by e-mail (paula.mcleod@sqa.org.uk), or by direct dial (0141-242 2148).

1 Principal Assessor report

The Principal Assessor (PA) report for the 2005 diet of examinations is available on the NQ Science subject-specific pages of SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

The PA report contains statistical information on candidate entries, grade boundaries and detailed comments on candidate performance in areas of the external exam in which candidates performed well, and in areas in which candidates had difficulty. It is pleasing to note that candidate performance has improved and there was an increase in the number of candidates achieving the higher awards.

2. Senior Moderator report

The Senior Moderator report for 2005 will be posted on SQA's website early in 2006.

The Senior Moderator report includes general information on the moderation event and specific issues identified for the following area:

- Standard Grade Science Practical Abilities

3 **Marking instructions**

The detailed marking instructions for the 2005 examination Standard Grade Science (Foundation, General and Credit) are available on SQA's website on the NQ Science subject-specific page.

4 **Appeals 2005**

Centres are referred to the SQA publication: *Estimates, Absentees and External Assessment Appeals: guidance on evidence requirements, April 2004*, which provides generic and subject-specific guidance on generating evidence. This publication can be accessed from the subject-specific pages of SQA's website.

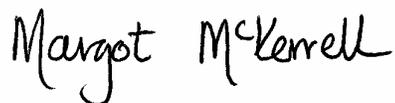
The success rate for appeals in Standard Grade Science showed improvement in both the Knowledge and Understanding element and the Problem Solving element. Successful appeals in the Knowledge and Understanding element increased from 70% in 2004 to 76% in 2005. Successful appeals for the Problem Solving element increased from 56% in 2004 to 61% in 2005.

5 **Update on the development of National Courses in Science**

The previous update letter (October 2004) reported that a Science Subject Advisory Group would be set up. Members of this group were appointed but, prior to their first meeting, SQA was told to put the work of this group on hold until the outcomes are known from the curricular groups currently considering S1-S3 under the auspices of *A Curriculum for Excellence (ACE)*. It is anticipated that this information may become available in spring 2006. Further information on ACE may be obtained by accessing the website (www.accurriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk).

I hope that the contents of this letter are helpful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further clarification.

Yours faithfully



Dr. Margot McKerrell
Qualifications Manager
NQ Maths and Science