

17 December 2008

To: Head of centres

Cc: SQA Co-ordinator  
Secondary schools and colleges  
Education Authorities  
HMIE

Action by Recipient
Response required
✓ Note and pass on
Note — update/information only

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Dear Colleague

### **NQ Travel and Tourism**

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 Travel and Tourism. It contains information about the following:

1. Internal and External Assessment reports
2. Support for Intermediate 2 Travel and Tourism (C217 11)
  - a. Business Practices Unit (DM4M 11)
  - b. Course on 'Setting , Vetting and Marking External Assessment for Intermediate 2'
3. Structure of the Travel and Tourism Industry (DM4P 12)
4. Changes to the NAB for Air Travel — An Introduction (DF6M 12)
5. Changes to Selling Overseas Tourist Destinations (CO3T 11)
6. National Certificates in Travel and Tourism — update
  - a. ASPs
  - b. Note to schools
7. Feedback on appeals
8. Keeping up with the industry

## **1. Internal and External Assessment reports**

The above reports are now available on the Travel and Tourism pages of SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)). It is recommended that those involved in the delivery of Travel and Tourism Units and Courses take time to read through them as they contain useful feedback on the 2008 diet. This includes information about areas in which candidates performed well together with advice to centres about areas in which they found difficulties.

## **2. Support for Intermediate 2 Travel and Tourism (C217 11)**

### **a. Business Practices Unit (DM4M 11)**

The Understanding Standards website ([www.understandingstandards.org.uk](http://www.understandingstandards.org.uk)) will shortly have support materials posted on it which will provide examples of materials submitted to SQA for verification. It is hoped these will provide centres with useful guidance to help them make decisions about candidate performance and at the same time show examples of how this evidence may be gathered.

### **b. Course on Setting, Vetting and Marking External assessment for Intermediate 2**

In mid November all centres were notified through their SQA Co-ordinators of a Course being run jointly by SQA Academy and Scotland's Colleges. The first day of this two day course has already been held on 3 December but it is still possible to find out more about the course and register for the second day on 11 February 2009 go to:

<http://www.sqaacademy.com/moodle/course/category.php?id=21>

## **3. Structure of the Travel and Tourism Industry (DM4P 12)**

In response to comments from schools and colleges, this Unit has been revised and in August 2009 it will be replaced by a new version. This is not fundamentally different from the existing Unit but does contain some slight alterations to the aims and outcomes. The appendix to the Unit has been rewritten to bring it more into line with current industry practice. This new Unit will have a new code and will be treated as direct replacement for DM4P 12, which will be withdrawn at that time. The new Unit will form the basis of assessment in the exam in 2010 and should be used by all centres presenting candidates for the Course in Travel and Tourism (C217 12). During the lapsing period of the existing Unit the new one will be treated as equivalent and both will be valid as part of the National Certificates in Travel and Tourism (G8YT 45 and G8YV 46). This information about lapsing Arrangements is of importance to colleges which may be presenting candidates for these qualifications and is very unlikely to be relevant to the school sector.

The new Unit descriptor and code will be published in January 2009. The nature of the changes are such that there is no need to revise the specimen question paper which can continue to be used to provide a guide to the exam in Travel and

Tourism. Some minor changes to the NABs will also be made. The NAB for DM4P 12 will remain available during the lapsing period for the Unit and revised NABs with the new code will be published on SQA's secure website in January 2009.

**4. Changes to the NAB for Air Travel — An Introduction (DF6M 12)**

The NAB for this Unit is currently being revised to ensure that it is compatible with ticketless air travel. A revised version of the NAB will be published in January 2009.

**5. Changes to Selling Overseas Tourist Destinations (CO3T 11)**

An updated version of the Specification for this Course can be downloaded from the NQ Travel and Tourism pages of SQA's website. This new version contains changes to the case studies, has some minor changes in the wording used in the specification and also includes a flow chart which should assist both candidates and lecturers with the process involved in the creation of the case study report.

**6. National Certificates in Travel and Tourism (G8YT 45 and G8YV 46) — update**

**a. Assessment Support Packs**

Several of the Units which are part of these qualifications now have ASPs available on the secure area of SQA's website. These are:

F3PC 11	Accommodation and Package Holidays
F3PD 11	Airport Ground Operations: An Introduction
F3PE 11	British Isles Tourist Destinations
F3PF 11	European and Mediterranean Tourist Destinations
F3PG 11	Popular Longhaul Tourist Destinations
F3PH 11	Resort Representation: An Introduction
F3PJ 11	Selling Skills
F38X 11	Skills for Customer Care
F3PL 11	Travel and Tourism: Enhancing Skills for Employment
F3PK 11	Tour Guiding
F3PM 11	Working as Air Cabin Crew: An Introduction
F3P8 12	Airport Ground Operations
F3P9 12	Selling the Travel and Tourism Product
F38Y 12	Skills for Customer Care
F3PA 12	Travel and Tourism Study Visit
F3PB 12	Travel Industry: An Introduction
F3P7 12	Working as Air Cabin Crew

No further ASPs are planned at present.

## b. **Note to schools**

The information below may be of use to schools which are advising candidates about progression routes from Travel and Tourism Courses into further education.

The National Certificates referred to above are taught in colleges and may be used there by candidates as progression routes into Higher National Certificate (HNC) awards. The Units which comprise the Travel and Tourism Courses (C217 11 and 12) at Intermediate 2 and Higher levels are mandatory parts of the respective National Certificates and candidates who pass these in schools do not require to pass them again should they study the National Certificates at college. A grade C or above in the external assessment can also count as a credit toward these certificates as well. The Units in the Course at Intermediate 1 (C217 10) may also be used as credits in the optional section of the Intermediate 2 National Certificate.

For most of the Units in the National Certificates approval has to be sought by a centre planning to deliver them. Many of them may be suitable for a school environment and should schools wish to consider offering any of these they should contact one of SQA's approval officers (tel: 0845 279 1000) to look at the approval section of the website.

For further details about the Units within the NCs, please consult the NQ Group Awards section of SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk/nqga](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqga)).

## 7. **Feedback on appeals**

The External Assessment report does not provide advice about appeals evidence but the Examining Team has reported a number of important issues about evidence submitted, particularly at Intermediate 2 level:

- ♦ Cut off scores applied by centres are often too low. The advice provided in the Geography update letter is equally pertinent to Travel and Tourism and is repeated below:

'The subject-specific advice for Estimates, Absentees and External Assessment Appeals is contained within the guidance notes which can be accessed on the subject page of SQA's website. One of the key parts of this advice which it is vital for centres to consider is the level of demand made on their candidates when evidence is being generated. There are often large discrepancies between prelim performance and the final exam mark. It is not unusual for there to be a difference of well over 10 marks between these. This is most frequently found in centres which submit large numbers of appeals. In these cases it may be that the cut off scores set may not truly reflect the degree of challenge of the prelim. Prelim papers may cover all topics and be well constructed but where the teaching programme at the time of the prelim has only covered part of the Course content candidates should be very well prepared and therefore should be very successful in such an assessment. The level of demand of the final exam is much greater. A candidate who scores 75% in such a prelim may not have shown a performance equivalent to an 'A' grade. Very few, if any, prelim exams can replicate the demand of the final

exam and the cut off scores applied by centres when compiling estimates should clearly reflect this. In these, or similar circumstances, the cut off scores used should be raised significantly above the 70/60/50 notional boundaries. It is not possible to give specific guidance on the cut offs which should be applied as every centre's circumstances and prelim is unique but it is vital that estimates accurately reflect the demands made on candidates. Where there is a significant difference in the level of demand between evidence provided and the final exam the raising of the cut off score by *at least* one band may be appropriate.'

- ◆ In some cases there is tendency to include questions which are repetitive and which sample the same narrow area of the curriculum. This results in a poor balance of topics within such a prelim and significantly reduces its level of demand.
- ◆ There is evidence that the national standard is not being applied as rigorously as it should be in some marking. For advice about this it is suggested centres consult the Travel and Tourism, Intermediate 2 section of the Understanding Standards website (see above).

## 8. Keeping up with the industry

Previous update letters have reminded centres of the need to keep abreast of changes in the rapidly evolving travel and tourism industry. Suggestions for useful websites have been included in these letters.

One further website which might interest centres is one operated by The Scottish Tourism Forum:

- ◆ <http://www.stforum.co.uk>

This is mainly a website for industry users but it contains a useful newsletter within which there is often an 'industry update' section which is a useful source of up to the minute information. Another website:

- ◆ <http://blogs.bookassist.com/sco/blogs/news/2008/11/visitscotlandcom-brought-back-into.html>

contains information on the recent change of ownership/control of the visitscotland.com website. This again may be of interest to centres.

I trust that this information is of use to you. Should you wish any further advice about the content of this letter please contact me as indicated above.

Yours faithfully



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