

13 December 2005

To: Head of Centre

Cc: SQA Co-ordinator
(Secondary Schools and FE Colleges)

Action by Recipient	
	Response required
✓	Note and pass on
	None — 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. National Qualifications Review
2. Construction of prelims
3. Principal Assessors Reports
4. Senior Moderators Report

1 National Qualifications Review

All centres are reminded that the revised Units and Courses in Travel and Tourism have now replaced the Units and Courses which were in operation until July 2005. This means that all candidates who are being presented for the Course awards at the 2006 diet should be undertaking the Units relating to that Course. The only exception to this relates to candidates who were registered for the old Intermediate 1 Units during session 2004/2005. For any candidates in this position special arrangements are in place and these were explained in the subject update letter issued in July 2005. A copy of this letter is available from SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk). Course Assessment specifications and specimen question papers are also available from our website. NAB items for each Unit can be found on the secure area of our website. To access these secure documents, please see your centre's SQA Co-ordinator.

A further recommendation of the NQ Review was that the Course at Advanced Higher should be withdrawn. The last examination at this level will be in June 2006 and the Course will be withdrawn after that. Units which contribute to the Course will remain available as freestanding Units.

2 Construction of prelims

SQA's advice to centres about the construction of prelims which they may wish to use as evidence for estimates and appeals is unchanged for the coming diet of exams. Prelims which draw questions from a range of past papers (which can include specimen papers) and in which no single paper contributes more than one third of the total number of marks available will be treated as valid assessment instruments. In 2006 and 2007 the range of past papers available for the new exam will obviously be limited. However, many of the papers used in previous years contain questions which could be used or adapted for a prelim exam. Centres should note that half marks will not be used in the marking of exam papers in 2006 and beyond, so any questions which are adapted from previous papers or which are created by centres should use **full marks only**. Marking guidelines for the specimen papers and exams in the 2005 diet are available on our website and should be used where questions are drawn from these sources.

There have been enquiries about the use of prelims constructed within Authorities for use by several centres. While this is clearly an example of good practice within an Authority and reduces the workload for those teaching the subject, there are security risks associated with this strategy. It is likely that such a prelim would be used at different times in different centres and this means that there is a risk, however unlikely, that candidates in centres sitting the prelim at a later date may have had access to, or knowledge of, the content of such an exam. Very tight security measures would require to be in place to avoid the former while it is impossible to avoid the second of these potential risks. A more appropriate strategy might be for a bank of questions to be constructed and these could be then be used in the same way as past paper questions to construct a prelim exam. Such an exam would be a more reliable assessment instrument.

3 Principal Assessors Reports

SQA would like to encourage all centre staff responsible for Travel and Tourism to read the reports of the Principal Assessors and Senior Moderator for session 2004/2005 and the corresponding examination diet. The reports contain detailed advice and information pertaining to candidate performance, guidance for centres and specific issues relating to individual examination questions. These are available on the Travel and Tourism page of SQA's website.

In particular, the following advice is contained within these Reports:

Principal Assessors Report: Higher Tourism

Candidates are advised to:

- ◆ take care to read questions thoroughly
- ◆ use the marks allocation as a guide to the length of response required (often they are too short and lack detail)
- ◆ avoid stereotyping, eg elderly people associated with lack of mobility
- ◆ set out itineraries in a business format

Centres are advised to:

- ◆ ensure that up-to-date information is provided about tourism organisations
- ◆ ensure that franchising as a concept within the industry is understood

- ◆ make use of the published marking guidelines to assist with understanding standards at this level

Principal Assessors Report: Intermediate 2 Travel and Tourism

Candidates are advised to:

- ◆ ensure they know the meanings of key terms associated with the industry
- ◆ know the differences between public, private and voluntary sector organisations
- ◆ have a clear idea of the issues surrounding 'green tourism'

Centres are advised to:

- ◆ make use of up-to-date resource materials
- ◆ keep abreast of changes in the industry
- ◆ make use of the published marking guidelines to assist with understanding standards at this level
- ◆ ensure that candidates are prepared to answer questions from any area of the syllabus

Principal Assessors Report: Intermediate 1 Travel and Tourism

Candidates are advised to:

- ◆ ensure they use calculators in the exam
- ◆ ensure they revise thoroughly any case studies they have worked on during coursework

Centres are advised to:

- ◆ practice using atlases to locate and plot destinations
- ◆ practice the completion of booking forms and the retrieval of information for this

Principal Assessors Report: Intermediate 2 Selling Overseas Tourist Destinations

Candidates are advised to:

- ◆ number all pages carefully
- ◆ include all key information in main part of report, not in appendices
- ◆ ensure maps are clearly drawn and provide appropriate detail

Centres are advised to:

- ◆ provide internal feedback to candidates but avoid putting ticks on candidate work

Principal Assessors Report: Higher Retail Travel and Selling Scheduled Air Travel

Candidates are advised to:

- ◆ keep rough workings, brochures, internet printouts as evidence to support final presentation
- ◆ avoid bullet points when writing justifications of arrangements
- ◆ write itineraries in formal business style

Centres are advised to:

- ◆ encourage candidates to manage their time more efficiently
- ◆ ensure candidates are fully aware of all the areas which need to be included in their work

4 **Senior Moderators Report**

This Report will shortly be available from SQA's website. Much of the advice in this Report is specific to Units which no longer contribute to the new NQ Courses but it does provide general guidance to centres about the assessment of Units.

I have copied this circular to your SQA Co-ordinator for information.

Yours faithfully



Keith H Wright
Qualifications Manager — Social Subjects

Encs