

8 January 2007

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. Updated advice on Estimates, Absentees and Appeals
2. Principal Assessors' reports
3. Senior Moderator's report
4. National Certificate Group Awards
5. Useful contacts

1. Updated advice on Estimates, Absentees and Appeals

SQA has recently updated the *Estimates, Absentees and Assessment Appeals: Guidance on evidence requirements* document and this is now available on our website (www.sqa.org.uk). A hard-copy is being issued to every centre. In particular, the document clarifies subject-specific requirement as well as guidance on the general principles for generating Estimates and submitting Appeals.

When generating Estimates and compiling evidence for Absentee consideration and Appeals, you should also refer to:

- ◆ Course Arrangements documents, which include Course Grade descriptions
- ◆ Course Assessment specifications
- ◆ SQA question papers, including specimen question papers
- ◆ SQA marking instructions
- ◆ Principal Assessor reports, which include information on Grade boundaries
- ◆ exemplification materials
- ◆ any other relevant information (eg Course reports, subject update letters)

These materials, and more, are also available on the subject pages of our website (www.sqa.org.uk).

2. 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 2005/06 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 Assessor's report: Higher Travel and 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)
- ◆ set out itineraries in a business format
- ◆ where appropriate, to study in detail both the location and attractions of the tourist destinations covered

Centres are advised to:

- ◆ ensure candidates are fully familiar with the current role of VisitScotland
- ◆ give due recognition to the importance of business tourism
- ◆ stress the interactions and interdependencies between various sections of the tourist industry
- ◆ ensure candidates can use SWOT analysis when looking at the potential for tourism developments
- ◆ consider with candidates the variety of promotional techniques suitable for different market segments
- ◆ examine a wider range of Scottish fare and produce beyond the traditional stereotypes, eg haggis and whisky

Principal Assessor's report: Intermediate 2 Travel & Tourism

Candidates are advised to:

- ◆ know the meanings of key terms associated with the industry
- ◆ know the differences between public, private and voluntary sector organisations
- ◆ study the historical contribution to the tourism industry of several key Acts of Parliament
- ◆ have an awareness of the role of major technology systems in the tourism industry, eg GDS, Galileo

Centres are advised to:

- ◆ make use of up-to-date resource materials
- ◆ keep abreast of changes in the industry (see section five of this letter)

- ◆ ensure that candidates are prepared to answer questions from any area of the syllabus
- ◆ attach importance to the teaching and assessment of customer care and marketing

Principal Assessor's report: Intermediate 1 Travel & Tourism

Performance at this level was commended this year. However, advice issued after the 2005 diet remains important.

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 ensure candidates practice:

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

Principal Assessor's report: Intermediate 2 Selling Overseas Tourist Destinations

Candidates are advised to:

- ◆ number all pages carefully and link these correctly to the contents page
- ◆ 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 Assessor's report: Higher Retail Travel, and Selling Scheduled Air Travel

Candidates are advised to:

- ◆ keep rough workings, brochures and internet printouts as evidence to support final presentation
- ◆ avoid bullet points when writing justifications of arrangements
- ◆ write itineraries in formal business style
- ◆ ensure that adequate time and importance is attached to the planning of the project

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
- ◆ support candidates appropriately with the (more difficult) evaluation stage of the project

3. Senior Moderator's report

This report is available on SQA's website and provides general guidance to centres about the assessment of Units. It commends the generally high quality of organisation of

evidence, internal quality assurance procedures and organisation of this evidence and also notes that centres should:

- ◆ not be using half marks in the marking of any assessment
- ◆ continue to use cross marking or equivalent internal quality assurance procedures

The report also notes that there is confusion in some centres about the use of the term ‘amenity’ in the context of travel and tourism Units. This term refers to features at holiday destinations which can be **used** by visitors.

4. National Certificate Group Awards

Work on the development of National Certificates and National Progression Awards is ongoing and centres will be kept informed through separate correspondence of progress in this area of work. It is aimed to make the new National Certificate Course available at Intermediate 2 level from August 2008. This Course, which is aimed at the further education sector, will run in parallel to the NQ Course at the same level. SQA’s website provides more detailed information about the development of National Certificate Courses.

5. Useful Contacts

Recent Principal Assessor reports have noted the continually changing landscape within the travel and tourism industry and the related need to ensure that teaching of terminology, industry structures and developments keep apace with the rapidly changing environment. There are numerous websites and publications which can help teachers and lecturers keep abreast of developments. Some of these are noted below.

- ◆ VisitScotland (www.visitscotland.org)
- ◆ Scottish Further Education Unit (www.sfeu.ac.uk) — this provides many direct links to tourism resources and contains a network on which colleagues can share information
- ◆ Learning and Teaching Scotland (www.ltscotland.org.uk) is the main provider of support materials for teaching National Qualifications. The NQ e-library and the online links provide further resources which can be accessed easily.
- ◆ Many websites provide access to information about destinations. For information about the travel industry some other sites which may be useful include:
 - www.abta.com
 - www.galileo.com
 - www.scottishtravelagentsnews.co.uk

Access to information on parts of these sites may be dependent upon a subscription service.

I hope that the notes above are of help to you. If you have any queries about these or any other related issues please contact me or Greg Storey, the Qualifications Officer in this area, at the details given above.

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

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith H Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Keith H Wright
Qualifications Manager — Social Subjects

Encs