

ESOL



This update contains information relevant to your subject and details of the support available to you.

We also publish updates on the new National Courses in the 'Updates and Announcements' section of the relevant [subject pages](#). I would encourage you to make regular use of our subject pages, where you will find support documents, answers to common questions, and links to other areas of interest. You can also sign up for 'My Alerts', SQA's e-mail update service, that notifies you whenever content you are interested in is added or updated on our website. Visit www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts to register.

I hope you find the following update helpful, and please contact me if you have any questions.

Emma Bratchell
Qualifications Manager

The Qualifications Team

Emma Bratchell
Qualifications Manager

Aimee McNair
Qualifications Officer

Key messages from Diet 2014–15

Course Reports

We strongly recommend that you read the annual Course Reports for the subject and levels you are teaching. These reports are produced following the annual diet of exams and are published by the end of October. The reports provide informed and valuable comment on the assessment for each Component in the Course, and include a summary of:

- candidate performance in the Course assessment
- areas in which candidates performed well
- areas which candidates found demanding

The reports also contain advice on preparing future candidates, and statistical data relating to grade boundaries. Course Reports are available from the relevant [subject pages](#) of our website.

Verification Key Messages

Key Messages from round 2 of verification in session 2014–15 were published over the summer. They are available from the relevant [subject pages](#), where you can access them from the 'Verification and Course Reports' heading in the 'Assessment Support' section.

Documents and assessment support materials

It is important that you read the full suite of documents for your Course, as well as those relating to assessment, and that you refer to the latest versions.

Information on documents and assessment support materials for National 1 to Advanced Higher can be found at www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments.

National 3 to Higher Unit assessment support

In August 2015, we updated some Unit assessment support materials for National 3 to Higher. This follows feedback gathered from centres during session 2014–15.

Please refer to the 'Notification of Changes' tables for your curricular area, as these provide a summary of the changes to each document and include details of the revised version numbers. These are available from www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges.

The use of SQA-produced Unit assessments is not mandatory; however, if you are using them, we strongly encourage you to use the most up-to-date versions. Please note that you may continue to use existing versions of the Unit assessments until the end of session 2015–16 and both will be accepted for verification purposes.

The updated Unit assessment support materials are available from our secure website and you can arrange access to them through your SQA Co-ordinator.

Further information on the reasons for the changes to Unit assessment support, and guidance on the next steps to take, is provided below. This information was also communicated to centres in August 2015.

Subject	Reason for change	Next steps for centres
N3 ESOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESOL for Everyday Life (Free-time activities in the community (computer class)) – minor amendments to JET for Reading • ESOL Combined Approach (Employment with the Royal Mail) – amendments to the Writing assessment task and minor amendments to the Reading task. Corresponding amendments made to the JETs. • ESOL Combined Approach (Customer complaint) – minor amendments to JET for Listening and Speaking. • ESOL in Context – Work (Health and Safety at Work) – amendments made to Speaking task with corresponding changes to JET. Also minor amendments to JET for Reading and Listening. • ESOL for Everyday Life (Everyday life in the community (community clean up)) – amendments to Speaking and Listening tasks with corresponding changes to Listening JET. 	Centres are advised to download new copies of the revised documents.
N4 ESOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESOL for Everyday Life (Charity fundraising event) – minor amendment to Reading task. • ESOL Combined Approach (A memorable trip) – amendments made to Speaking task with corresponding changes to JET. Additional guidance on acceptable responses added to JET for Reading. • ESOL in Context – Work (Health and Safety at Work) – amendments made to Reading, Speaking and Writing tasks with corresponding changes to JET. Minor amendments also made to JET for Listening. 	Centres are advised to download new copies of the revised documents.

N5 ESOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESOL in Context (Leisure Centre) – significant changes to Reading questions with corresponding amendments to JET. Minor clarification to Writing task. • ESOL in Context (Enterprise and entrepreneurship) – amendments to both Reading tasks and corresponding acceptable responses in JET. • ESOL in Context (Job Interviews) – amendments to Reading tasks and corresponding acceptable responses in JET. • ESOL for Everyday Life (Managing Money) – minor amendment to Reading task and corresponding acceptable answers in JET. 	Centres are advised to download new copies of the revised documents.
Higher ESOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESOL for Everyday Life (News) – additional advice added to JET on acceptable responses for Reading task. • ESOL in Context – Work (Food Production/Healthy Lifestyle) – additional advice added to JET on acceptable responses for Reading and Writing tasks. • ESOL in Context – Study (Technology and Education) – additional advice added to JET on acceptable responses for Listening task. • ESOL in Context – Work (Procrastination) – additional advice added to JET on acceptable responses for Reading and Listening tasks. • ESOL in Context – Study (Procrastination) – additional advice added to JET on acceptable responses for Listening task. 	Centres are advised to download new copies of the revised documents.

Unit assessment support materials are available from our secure website and you can arrange access to them through your SQA Co-ordinator.

To find out more about using our Unit assessment support packs, visit www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment.

National 5 Course and Unit Support Notes

The following changes have been made to the National 5 ESOL Course and Unit Support Notes:

- the command word 'explaining' has been changed to 'identifying' for Outcomes 1 and 3 of both Units in order to bring them into line with the changes to the Unit Specification

National 5 Specimen Question Papers and past paper guidance

The Specimen Question Paper has been updated to reflect a change to the recommended number of words for Writing in Everyday Life. From 2016 onwards the recommended word count for this task will be 90–120 words as opposed to 80–100 words.

Advice and guidance

English Language Testing For Settlement and Nationality

Please note the Home Office's decision earlier this year which means that after the 5th November 2015, applicants for settlement or naturalisation will no longer be able to use SQA ESOL qualifications as evidence of their English language skills. From November 2015, applicants for settlement or naturalisation will be required to demonstrate their English language skills by taking a test at a test centre on the new Secure English Language Tests (SELT) list. Other English language qualifications will no longer be accepted for this purpose.

Further information on SELT tests can be found on the SELT pages of GOV.UK. Information about the changes for settlement and naturalisation will also be placed on the website.

For further information see SQA's update from earlier this year which was sent to all centres: <http://mailer.sqa.org.uk/english-language-testing-for-settlement-and-nationality/2015/16/27/deafc51d-3248-41a2-8e52-a46800da26da>

ESOL Common Questions Document

A Common Questions document has been produced for practitioners of ESOL which contains useful advice and guidance on Unit and Course assessment at all levels. It will include some advice on which genres will be sampled in the Writing Task in the National 5 and Higher Question Papers. The document will be available on the ESOL subject page from October 2015.

National Qualification Support Team

We are currently looking for members to join our newly formed NQST for ESOL. This is an opportunity for delivering practitioners of ESOL to represent their views at an annual meeting and on an online forum throughout the year. For more information please see: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/67181.html>.

New National 2 ESOL

Please note that a new ESOL Unit at SCQF level 2 is currently under development. The working title is Preparation for Literacy and it is designed as a precursor to the SCQF level 2 Beginner Literacies Units. More information will follow when this Unit is available for delivery.

Coming up in 2015–16

Understanding Standards 2015–16

From the end of October 2015, we will publish further Understanding Standards packs for National 1 to Higher. These packs contain candidate evidence and commentaries for Unit assessment and internally assessed Components of Course assessment.

From November 2015 to January 2016, we will hold subject-specific Understanding Standards events for teachers and lecturers. The main focus of these events will be on Course assessment at Higher. An Understanding Standards event for Higher ESOL will take place on the following date:

- 16 January 2016 (Glasgow)

Materials from the recent Nominee training events will also be published on our website.

For more information, visit www.sqa.org.uk/understandingstandards.

Details of the Understanding Standards materials for each subject are available from the [subject pages](#).

National 4 Added Value Units

You now have the option of developing your own National 4 Added Value Unit assessments for use with candidates.

Please note that this is not a requirement and you can continue to use SQA-produced Added Value Unit assessments. Most SQA-produced Added Value Unit assessments already allow considerable flexibility in the choice of a context for the assessment, while some provide a context that you can change.

If you choose to develop your own Added Value Unit assessment, we strongly advise submitting it to us for prior verification before using it with candidates.

Further information can be found at www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment.

Recruitment opportunities for 2016

We are now accepting Marker applications from teaching professionals to contribute to the 2016 examination diet. If you are interested in joining us as a Marker please visit the [appointee opportunities](#) section of our website where you will find a marker advert for all subjects and levels, with details of the role.

Our current Markers will confirm to you that the experience of marking helps increase their awareness of the demands of Course assessment and that marking is excellent professional and personal development.

PA Recruitment Opportunity

Applications are invited for the post of Principal Assessor – Higher ESOL. More information on this can be found at the [appointee opportunities](#) section of our website.

Please check www.sqa.org.uk/appointees regularly for other appointee opportunities which may be of interest to you.

Contact us

For centre enquiries, please contact our Customer Support Team:

Tel: 0303 333 0330

Fax: 0345 213 5000

E-mail: mycentre@sqa.org.uk

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