

5 February 2013

To: SQA Co-ordinators

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

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications Update — Politics

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member of staff responsible for Politics.

Examination Diet 2012

The Principal Assessor, Examining Team and Markers are thanked for delivering a successful diet. The examination was well received overall. There was a significant increase in candidates, from 302 in 2011 to 445 in 2012, and an increase in the number of centres from 27 to 34. This growth reflects the continued increase in S6 school presentations.

The Principal Assessor's report (*External Assessment Report*) and the Senior Verifier's report (*Internal Assessment Report*) are available on the Higher Politics subject pages on SQA's website.

Marking Instructions

The 2012 question papers and finalised marking instructions for Course assessments are available on the Higher Politics page of SQA's website. These can be useful documents for centres when constructing prelims and when preparing candidates for external assessment.

National Assessment Bank Materials (NABs)

NABs for all three Units were revised for the 2012/13 session in order to create better articulation with the external exam. Each unit now has 20 marks.

In the Political Representation NAB, the analyse and evaluate electoral data outcome two question, has six marks and the two essay questions seven marks each. In the Political Structures and Political Theory NABs, there are now two questions each worth ten marks.

Estimates and Appeals

The updated *Estimates, Absentees and Assessment Appeals Guidance on Evidence Requirements* (Published: October 2012 (Revised), Publication code: BA5212) is available on SQA's website. This document provides guidance on evidence requirements for estimates, absentee consideration and appeals consideration and is for subject specialists in centres that are delivering National Courses.

With regard to Higher Politics, centres should note the advice given about raising cut-off scores where split prelims are used. Centres are reminded that SQA past paper questions may be used in Prelims but whole question papers are not acceptable. At Higher level this means that Paper 1 should come from two past papers; Paper 2 should be drawn from three or more.

Centres are also reminded that Marking Instructions and sources of questions must be included with the evidence even when NABs or past SQA questions have been used.

Full guidance on the above is available via the SQA website.

Becoming a Marker

Each year the number of entries for the Higher Politics is increasing. If you are interested in becoming a marker in Politics, information and applications forms are available on the Appointee Management section of the SQA website. To become a Marker, we normally ask that you are in your third year of teaching the Course. We welcome applications throughout the year and, where a suitable vacancy exists, we may be able to offer an appointment for this year. The experience of marking helps to increase the awareness of the demands of Course assessment and is proven to be excellent professional and personal development.

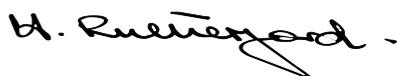
New Higher Politics

The development for the new Higher Politics is well underway and the Specimen Question Paper will be published in early 2014. It is recommended that you keep up to date on the progress of the development by visiting the dedicated webpages: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47925.html>. You are also encouraged to use the *Have Your Say* facility on SQA's website to record any comments or feedback that you may have on the development or related materials.

We are currently in the process of recruiting specialists to write and check items for the Specimen and Live Question Papers. If you are interested in becoming involved in the new Higher Politics development, please get in touch with me.

If you wish further clarification of any points in this letter, please contact either Duncan Cox (duncan.cox@sqa.org.uk) or myself at the above address.

Yours faithfully



Hilary Rutherford
Qualifications Manager

