

Our ref: AFNov2002/SO/ES

27 November 2002

To: SQA Co-ordinator
Secondary Schools and FE Colleges

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

Contact - Sharon O'Neil at Glasgow
Direct Line - 0141 242 2305
E-mail – sharon.o'neil@sqa.org.uk

Dear Colleague

National Qualifications Update – Accounting and Finance

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member of staff responsible for the National Qualifications in Accounting and Finance.

Standard Grade

a) Practical Abilities Projects

The Foundation, General and Credit Practical Abilities Projects, and associated paperwork for session 2002/3 were issued to centres on 1 October 2002. A booklet entitled 'Spreadsheet Instructions to Teachers' has been produced in response to centre feedback. A copy of this booklet was included with the projects sent to each centre.

Following consultation with the Financial Services and Accounting Assessment Panel, a suggested marking scheme for each of the projects has been developed. A copy will be issued to centres early in December. It is hoped that centres will find this helpful.

b) External Examination

It is SQA policy that half marks should not be used within external examinations. The Examination Team has taken this into account when setting the 2003

examination papers. To assist teachers, sample questions from the 2002 examination papers are attached. Please refer to Appendix 1 and 2. The figures provided in rounded brackets () show how the mark allocations were applied for the 2002 examination. The figures provided in the square brackets [] show how revised mark allocations will be applied in future examinations. Teachers may wish to take this into account when setting prelim examinations for 2003.

Advanced Higher

The Principal Assessor for Advanced Higher Accounting has set up an e-group to encourage sharing of ideas, issues and resources. Centres offering or considering offering the Advanced Higher can join this group by e-mailing the Group Manager at:

<http://www.smartgroups.com/groups/accountingandfinance>

External Examinations

During the marking procedures for 2002 examinations, it was noted by Examination Teams that some candidates completed their examination in pencil. Centres should remind candidates that all external examinations must be completed in ink.

NQ Interim Review

Centres will no doubt be aware that SQA has carried out an Interim Review of the Internal Assessment for Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher Accounting. This has resulted in a substantial reduction in the volume of assessment required by candidates and teachers/lecturers. The Course Arrangements have not changed therefore this should not change the teaching and learning as all topics can be covered in the final examinations. The new internal assessment arrangements were effective from August 2002. Details of the new assessment arrangements were distributed to centres in June 2002 and a copy was posted on SQA's website.

NQ Review

Accounting is included in the next phase of National Qualification reviews. A Development Officer has been appointed and is expected to take up post early in the new year. The main aims of the review are to revise the content, structure and assessment of the courses. Many teachers and lecturers have already given valuable feedback on these qualifications and their comments will be taken into consideration during the review. Further consultation will take place giving centres the opportunity to comment on the structure, content, assessment and other related issues. Further information will be provided on the progress of the review and the likely timescale for implementation of revised arrangements and NABs as soon as possible.

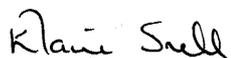
Principal Assessor Reports

Extracts from the relevant Principal Assessors' annual reports relating to the 2002 examination diet are available on SQA's website www.sqa.org.uk. These reports provide valuable information in relation to candidate performance in this year's examinations.

I hope you and your staff find this update helpful. If you require clarification on any of the above points, please contact:

Elaine Snell, Qualifications Manager 0141 242 2336
Sharon O'Neil, Qualifications Officer 0141 242 2305

Yours faithfully



Elaine Snell
Qualifications Manager – Business and Languages

Enc.