

Our ref: CH/EM

25 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 Name – Elaine McFadyen at Glasgow
Direct Line – 0141 242 2342
E-Mail – elaine.mcfadyen@sqa.org.uk

Dear Colleague

National and Higher National Qualifications in Psychology

This circular updates centres on issues arising in Psychology from exam diet 2002 and session 2002/03.

Diet 2002

The Principal Assessor and Senior Moderator reports for diet 2002 can now be found on the SQA web-site – www.sqa.org.uk. These include:

PA report Intermediate 1 & 2

PA report Higher & Advanced Higher

Senior Moderator report National and Higher National Qualifications

The reports contain feedback on candidate performance in the 2002 diet and are of benefit to all teachers and lecturers in Psychology. Information includes identification of areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well or had difficulty and identification of areas of common misunderstanding. The reports also give recommendations to centres for the future.

Appeals

Stage 1 and 2 appeals are now complete. It was noted during the appeals process that some centres were still submitting invalid evidence. Colleagues are requested to follow the guidance set out in the following documents prior to submitting appeals:

The Appeals Process: a guide to centres June 2002 – AS0690/3

Notes of guidance to centres on the Appeals process and on the preparation of evidence to support estimates and appeals.

Both documents can be downloaded from the SQA web-site.

The documents clearly indicate what constitutes acceptable evidence. Evidence must be provided to support the whole course and not just one or two of the course component units. Evidence should also meet the standard of the grade being appealed for.

Advanced Higher Psychology

The format of the paper at Advanced Higher was changed for diet 2002. A copy of the 2002 paper was sent out to all centres in August this year. In addition, Marking Instructions have also been published and are available to download from the SQA web-site. Previously the paper included two sections, with Section B containing five Options. The revised format has six sections and candidates must answer all of Section A and one Section from B, C, D, E or F.

Higher Psychology

Changes have been made in Higher Psychology which take effect from Session 2002/03. The Additional Major Studies have been removed from the course. Questions on these Additional Major Studies will not appear in future question papers.

The format of the question paper and Specimen Question Paper has been amended in the following way. The candidate will be required to answer on ONE study; the question will be worth 15 marks, comprising several short answer questions. The questions will test the candidates' knowledge of the study in depth. Candidates will NOT be asked to repeat aims, methods and conclusions as for NABs, but rather show understanding of specifics of the given study. There will also be some slight amendments to the format of questions relating to Approaches and Methods.

Questions may vary from year to year in terms of the emphasis on aims, limitations and applications of approaches, or in terms of how many approaches and/or methods being asked for. It is not necessary for the question paper to ask a question on each performance criterion from each outcome, as the structure is determined through sampling of the material to be covered, as stated in the Arrangements Document.

The revised Arrangements Document, Specimen Question Paper and Marking Instructions are available to download from the SQA our web-site.

National Qualifications Review

National Courses in Psychology are part of 'phase 3' of the National Review of Courses. A major review is being carried out to revise the structure, content and assessment of Psychology courses. A Development Officer is being appointed to lead the review and a consultation exercise with all centres will begin in December this year to gauge the views of all stakeholders.

The report based on the previous consultation exercise held at the end of 2001 can currently be found on the SQA web-site.

Higher National Qualifications

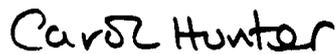
The new HNC/D Social Sciences, which was validated in March 2002 using the pilot HNC/D design rules, is now in its first year of implementation. The expiry date for the old HNC is 31 July 2004. The expiry date for the old HND is 31 July 2005. This means last entries for both the old HNC and old HND will be July 2003. A suite of new units with accompanying exemplar materials has been distributed to all centres that are represented on the HNC/D Social Sciences consortium. Units can also be downloaded from the SQA web-site.

Assessment Panel Social Sciences

The panel is now up and running and will meet twice a year. If you wish to make contact with your representatives on this panel, please contact christine.nicol@sqa.org.uk.

I hope that you find this information useful. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to telephone Carol Hunter on 0141 242 2326 or Elaine McFadyen on 0141 242 2342.

Yours faithfully



Carol Hunter
Qualifications Manager