

Our ref: NQ/TT/PBNC/KW

22 December 2004

To: Head of Centre
Secondary Schools,
FE Colleges, SCIS
Education Authorities
Customer Account Managers

cc: SQA Co-ordinator

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

Contact Name — Keith Wright
Direct Line — 0141-242 2202
E-mail — keith.wright@sqa.org.uk

Dear Colleague

National Qualifications: Travel and Tourism Update Letter

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.

This letter deals with four topics:

- ◆ 2004 Diet: Information and advice from Principal Assessors and the Senior Moderator about candidate performance
- ◆ Intermediate 1: use of atlases in exams
- ◆ estimates and appeals
- ◆ Higher Approval
- ◆ National Qualifications Review: changes to Units and Courses due to be implemented from August 2005

A. 2004 Exam Diet

The Principal Assessors' Reports and Senior Moderator's Report are available on the Travel and Tourism subject page of the SQA website (www.sqa.org.uk) and all teachers/lecturers who deliver these qualifications are advised to read these carefully. These Reports provide information about areas in which candidates performed well or in which they had difficulty. It is recommended that you read these reports in full. The main points highlighted by the Principal Assessors are summarised below.

a) Intermediate 1: Travel and Tourism

Examiners noted a drop in the quality of candidates in the 2004 diet. Far fewer 'A' passes were awarded. The Principal Assessor suggested centres note that:

- ◆ although candidates have the use of atlases in the exam they make insufficient use of them

- ◆ detailed knowledge of specific holiday destinations was poor

b) Intermediate 2: Travel and Tourism

The pass rate was up on the performance in 2003 and this reflected the view of examiners that the cohort, on the whole, seemed to be well prepared. There were, however some points of concern which were raised in the Report:

- ◆ many responses seemed to suggest that candidates were not fully aware of recent developments in the industry, eg the importance of incentive travel, corporate entertainment and the public sector was not clear to many candidates. Some candidates referred to the Scottish Tourist Board instead of VisitScotland in their answers.
- ◆ the level of knowledge of specific uses of IT in the travel business was weak in a lot of responses.

c) Higher: Tourism

There were few good performances in the exam. Higher Tourism is quite a demanding exam and requires a sound knowledge of the industry and its workings for candidates to be successful. Points noted in the Report include:

- ◆ recent developments, eg the importance to the incoming tourism business of niche markets such as genealogy, were not understood
- ◆ marketing questions were poorly answered
- ◆ many candidates appear to have a poor mental map of Scotland

d) Intermediate 2: Selling Overseas Tourist Destinations

Some of the submissions were incomplete and this had an obvious impact on awards. The key issues were:

- ◆ in the evaluation section candidates are expected to **compare** potential tourist destinations and use this in their justification for the conclusion reached about the centre which is being recommended to clients.
- ◆ there was evidence that some candidates may have had sight of marking instructions. Teachers/lecturers are reminded that the marking instructions should not, under any circumstances, be shown to candidates. It is acceptable to advise candidate on the principles which will be applied in the marking of their work but information given to candidates should not go beyond this.

e) Higher: Retail Travel and Selling Scheduled Air Travel

The Principal Assessor's Report provides extensive feedback for centres, raising awareness of areas which have been well tackled and identifying areas for improvement.

f) Senior Moderator's Report

Advice and guidance is provided on a number of points, but in particular:

- ◆ The use of internet sources in the investigative work in the Intermediate 2 Unit on 'Travel and Tourism: An Introduction'. (D438 11). This is a difficult area. While the use of this resource is to be encouraged it is not sufficient for candidates simply to download pages of text/data and present this as evidence of their research. If they are including such a resource in their work they should have text or data 'built around' it. It should be the basis for exemplification rather than an end in itself. Moderators rely

heavily on the judgement of teachers/lecturers in the sourcing and use of such resources.

- ◆ It was also noted that some centres reassessed their candidates orally. This is acceptable. However, evidence of this oral assessment should be provided. This could take the form of a teacher/lecturer written record of candidate responses, a summary or tape of the discussion or perhaps some general notes taken during the assessment. These notes might record general discussion which was part of the reassessment. They could be in written or taped format.

B. Intermediate 1: Travel and Tourism — 2005 and beyond.

a) Use of atlases in the exam:

From 2005 candidates will be required to write the name of the atlas they are using in the exam on the front of their exam script. It is hoped that this might increase their awareness of the atlas and encourage better use of this resource in their exam.

b) Evidence for Appeals :

Feedback given to a number of centres at appeals stage this year referred to ‘too much of the prelim being in the public domain’. While it is always preferable that centres produce their own prelim questions or, at least, modify questions used in past papers, this is not always possible. It is important to ensure that where questions are drawn from past papers a prelim should consist of questions from at least three papers. Care should also be taken to ensure that no more than one third of the prelim, ie two questions, are drawn from the same paper. There is also a preference that the more recent papers be used for this purpose.

C. Higher Travel and Tourism Approval

The existing Higher Tourism Course requires centres to seek approval from SQA to deliver the subject at this level. Centres already approved for Higher Tourism will be automatically approved, as a matter of course, for the new Higher Travel and Tourism without further application. However, centres not already approved for Higher Tourism and wishing to offer Higher Travel and Tourism for the first time should note that as this Course is not automatically approved, approval must be sought and obtained. Otherwise candidate entries will be rejected.

Centres wishing to offer this Course should contact the Approvals section of SQA before they embark on the delivery of the Course and an SQA officer will be able to go through the approval requirements with the centre before the Course commences. These will normally include an approval visit from SQA.

The approval process is not a major hurdle which has to be overcome but SQA has to ensure that candidates who are being presented for this Course are in a position to receive the quality of learning and teaching experiences the Course requires. For the purposes of Higher Travel and Tourism it is important that:

- ◆ those delivering the Course either have recent experience working in the travel industry, **and/or**
- ◆ have access to and intend to undertake staff development opportunities which ensure that they are fully aware of the current situation in the industry
- ◆ candidates have work placements in the industry, **and/or**

- ◆ there should be a clear programme of visits to travel and tourism businesses/organisations, **and/or**
- ◆ a schedule of visiting speakers should be arranged within the teaching programme

D. Appendix — National Qualification Review

Revised Travel and Tourism Units and Courses are currently going through final edits and printing. The revised Units and Course will operate from **August 2005** at which time the existing Courses will be withdrawn. The existing Intermediate 1 Units will be withdrawn at this time. As many of the existing Units at Intermediate 2 and Higher also contribute to Core Skills, Project-based National Courses, or Scottish Group Awards they will remain in the catalogue as free standing Units. They will only be able to contribute to these qualifications. Centres which are presenting candidates in the revised Course will have to use the new/revised Units. As a result of the change to the Units at Higher level this Course will no longer receive the Core Skill of Problem Solving at Higher level. It will instead have Intermediate 2 Core Skills in Problem Solving embedded within it. Details about Course structure, assessment, content, teaching support materials, publication of specifications and launch events are contained within the Appendix to this letter.

I trust that the information contained within this update letter is of use to the teachers / lecturers delivering these Units and Courses. Should you have any questions relating to the content of this letter or should any of the changes outlined above be likely to cause difficulties in your centre it is important that you contact SQA as soon as possible.

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

Yours faithfully



Keith H Wright
Qualifications Manager, Social Subjects

Encs

Appendix