



THE NEW IT QUALIFICATION

What is it?

PC Passport is a new suite of qualifications awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). The scheme is perfect for students and employees who want to learn how to use computers or to improve their existing knowledge.

PC Passport is made up of National Units, and will be recognised by employers, training providers and admissions staff. It's a Scottish Progression Award (SPAs are designed as a stepping-stone to employment), and one of the first UK qualifications to be based on the IT User Framework created by the E-Skills Sector Skills Council, which means it is relevant to the workplace.

SQA is presently in discussion with international awarding bodies to ensure that PC Passport is recognised across the world – and we're working with Microsoft to ensure that centres which offer PC Passport using Microsoft Office products gain full recognition.

Qualifications Structure

PC Passport is a flexible, inclusive scheme. Three skill levels ensure that everyone can benefit. The levels are:

BEGINNER

INTERMEDIATE

ADVANCED

The Beginner course is designed for the absolute novice. No prior experience is required for this level and the component Units are very straightforward.

The Intermediate course is intended for more competent users and focuses on the key skills required in the modern workplace.

The Advanced course is for those whose experience of IT makes them comfortable with the technology – the sort of person that co-workers will come to for help.

What's Covered?

The Units at each level are:

BEGINNER

PC Passport: Internet
PC Passport: Word Processing
PC Passport: Spreadsheets

INTERMEDIATE

PC Passport: Internet
PC Passport: Word Processing
PC Passport: Spreadsheets
PC Passport: Presentations

ADVANCED

PC Passport: Internet
PC Passport: Word Processing
PC Passport: Spreadsheets
PC Passport: Presentations
PC Passport: Databases

By focusing on industry-standard software and skills, the qualifications complement the vocational courses your students are currently undertaking.

PC Passport has attempted to combine the best features of existing qualifications – and address some of their weaknesses.

Key Features

- Low cost, simple structure
- Straightforward administration for centres
- Inexpensive for centres – and students
- National certification – for the Scottish Progression Award and for every Unit
- Includes IT Core Skills
- Hardware and software independent – can be done on PC or Apple Mac.
- Simple to teach and assess
- Free assessment and teaching materials
- Online assessment

Mixing and Matching

Students can undertake Units from any level.

To achieve a Group Award at any of the three levels, students have to pass all the Units in that level (or higher). So, a student who has passed, for example, Spreadsheets at Beginner level can use passes in Internet and Word Processing at Intermediate to count towards a Group Award pass at Beginner level.

This system ensures students fulfil their potential and achieve recognition for their skills.

PC Passport has simple resource requirements. Most centres which are set up to deliver IT qualifications should have no problem delivering PC Passport.

Assessment

PC Passport can be assessed traditionally, or online (e-assessment). However students' work is assessed, the assessment will be valid and reliable, and as simple as possible for both students and teachers.

SQA is committed to introducing simple, inexpensive online assessment in 2004. We are currently working with partners to agree a suitable platform that can be deployed in schools, colleges, training centres and workplaces. Any centre with internet access, running Internet Explorer (v4 or later) will be able to provide online assessments.

Further Information

It's easy to find out more:

- Point your browser at: www.pcpassport.org
- Call our Customer Contact Centre on: 0845 279 1000
- E-mail us at: customer@sqa.org.uk

Alternatively, existing SQA customers should speak to their local Customer Account Manager.



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