

22 November 2007

To: SQA Co-ordinators  
(secondary schools and colleges of further education)  
Directors of Education  
SCIS  
Customer Support Managers

Action by Recipient
Response required
✓ Note and pass on
Note — 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.

### **SQA's website**

The subject page is the main source of information on the National Qualification in Politics. It contains the current and past reports of the Principal Assessor, the Course specification, specimen question paper, previous National Qualifications updates and marking instructions for the 2006 and recent diets. The website address is [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk). From the homepage, select 'NQ', then 'Politics' from the drop-down menu, then select 'GO'.

### **Examination diet 2007**

The Principal Assessor, Examining Team and Markers are warmly thanked for continuing to deliver a successful diet. This was the first year of the new Higher Politics Course with the examination being well received overall. Encouragingly, the number of candidates increased from 75 to 94 which augurs well for the future.

Performances remained good although marks in paper 2 were slightly down while paper 1 were slightly up. In paper 1 there was a tendency for candidates to spend too long on question 1, worth 6 marks, and less time on question 2 which was worth 14 marks. Candidates should be advised to spend the appropriate amount of time on a question relative to the marks it is worth.

The full reports of the Principal Assessor and Senior Verifier are posted on our website ( [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk) ).

### **Estimates and appeals**

The updated *Guidance on Estimates, Absentees and Assessment* is now available on our website. Two hard copies of the document have been issued to every centre. This advice was reinforced in my letter to centres of 10 April 2007.

In particular, centres should heed the advice given where split prelims are administered. The difficulty level should be adjusted accordingly, the most straightforward method being by raising the cut-off scores. Centres must also indicate on each part of a candidate's evidence the date (dd/mm/yy) on which it was produced. Prelim papers should also carry a date.

When generating estimates and compiling evidence for absentee consideration and appeals, centres should also refer to the documents listed in the 2006 newsletter. All queries on appeals should be addressed to the Appeals Helpline at [\*\*appeals@sqa.org.uk\*\*](mailto:appeals@sqa.org.uk).

If you wish further clarification of any points in this letter, please contact either Duncan Cox (0845 213 5498; [\*\*duncan.cox@sqa.org.uk\*\*](mailto:duncan.cox@sqa.org.uk)) or myself at the above address.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry Cheyne". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Larry Cheyne  
Qualifications Manager