Scottish Qualifications Authority

Ùghdarras Theisteanas Na H-Alba

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SQA Co-ordinator

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Dear Colleague

The content of this letter should be passed to the members of staff responsible for the delivery of:

**HNC/D Accounting
HNC/D Administration and Information Technology
HNC/D Business
HNC/D Financial Services**

**General Update**

**Qualification Verification Summary Reports**

The Qualification Verification Summary Reports (QVSRs) for Accounting, Administration and Information Technology and Business are expected to be published onto the relevant HN subject pages around end of September 2018. The purpose of these reports, which are based on the Qualification Quality Assurance Criteria 2015-18, is to provide an annual summary of visiting and central verification activity in relation to HN Qualifications.

**HN Network Support Events**

We continue to receive positive delegate feedback from the annual Network Support Events. Those attending highlighted the importance of being able to meet practitioners from across the sector and therefore it is our intention to host similar events for the three HN subject areas: Accounting, Administration and Information Technology and Business HNs in early 2019. Centres will be notified of the dates and process for booking places towards the end of this year.

**HN Survey**

Our 7th HN annual survey is now complete and we wish to thank all of those who took time to complete these. The surveys provide valuable feedback from both practitioners and learners, and are used to inform future qualification developments and projects. The responses will be summarised and presented for discussion at the next Qualification Support Team (QST) meeting planned for end of October 2018.

**Arrangements Documents and Group Award Specifications (GAS)**

As part of our annual housekeeping process the Arrangements Documents (and Group Award Specifications) are currently being reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to the Group Award frameworks and their content. Centres should ensure that they are using the most up to version for each Group Award framework. This can be found on each of the HN subject pages.

**Assessment Exemplars (AEs)/Assessment Support Packs (ASPs)**

A list of assessment exemplars/support packs is available to download from the relevant subject page.

Monthly updates on new/revised ASPs can be accessed at [Internal Assessment Support Materials](https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2824.html).

**Update Letters**

The link to the Update Letters can be found at the top of each HN subject web page.

**Providing feedback on Qualification content to SQA**

Centres wishing to provide feedback to SQA regarding the content of any of the Business-related HNC or HNDs may do so via email at mycentre@sqa.org.uk. In addition, centres may also provide feedback via the annual surveys.

**Conditions of Assessment in HN Graded Units**

A communication was sent to centres in June 2018 clarifying SQA’s approaches to **reassessment, remediation** and **reasonable assistance** in Graded Units. All Graded Unit specifications have been updated to include this, and **final candidate grade,** information.

**HN Accounting**

Guidance on tax legislation has been inserted into the Support Notes of the unit specifications for **Income Tax (F86X 35), Payroll (H4J9 34) and Business Taxation (J0LY 35).**

**Guidance on the content and context for this Unit**

Candidates should be made aware that the Scotland Act 2016 provides the Scottish Parliament with the power to set all income tax rates and bands (except the personal allowance, which remains reserved) that will apply to Scottish taxpayers’ non-savings, non-dividend income (ie employment salary, income from pensions, profits from self-employment and rental profits).

While the Scottish Parliament has the power to set the Scottish income tax rates and bands, HMRC will continue to be responsible for its collection and management. Receipts from Scottish income tax will be collected by HMRC and paid to the Scottish Government (via HM Treasury). As such Scottish income tax remains part of the existing UK income tax system and is not a devolved tax[[1]](#footnote-1).

Centres should update content annually to reflect legislative changes.

**Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit**

Centres should update delivery and assessment materials on an annual basis to take account of changes in legislation, tax rates, personal allowances, etc. It is acceptable to use either the Scottish **or** UK taxation legislation in the assessment of this Unit.

We have updated Assessment Support Packs (ASPs) using the 2018/19 tax rates, with the ASP for Payroll due to be published by the end of September 2018.

**Business Taxation (J0LY 35)**

The Unit specification has been revised - Outcomes 3 and 4 have been combined requiring the unit to be re-coded. The new code is J0LY 35. The ASP is available from the SQA secure website.

**HN Administration and Information Technology**

**Recording Financial Transactions (HH81 33)**

Following feedback from centres, amendments have been made to some of the Error Tolerances within this unit as follows:

Outcome 1 – ***increase from 2 to 3 Errors of Principle***

Outcome 3 – ***increase from 0 to 1 Error of Principle***

The ASP has been updated to reflect this change.

**Administration and Information Technology: Graded Unit 1 (HH9M 34)**

Formative assessment material in SOLAR is available to provide candidates with practice of using online assessment. This includes both Paper 1 and Paper 2 and is available at [sqasolar.org.uk](https://www.sqa.org.uk/mini/33142.1578.1580.html) under the tab ‘*OpenAssess*’.

**Digital Technologies for Administrators (HH82 34)**

A delivery and assessment guide has been developed for online assessment of this unit using the SOLAR e-portfolio. It is available on the [HN Administration and IT](https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/25688.html) webpage.

A new ASP will be developed to support this unit. This will be a portfolio-based assessment covering all Outcomes, however its precise format is not yet confirmed. It is expected to be published in early 2019.

**Presentation Skills (HH85 35)
Information and Communication Technology in Business (HH87 35)**

A new ASP will be developed to support combined assessment of these units following the changes made at the last review. It is expected to be published in early 2019.

**Units added to Optional Section**

The following unit has been added to the optional section of the HNC and HND structures (GM10 15/GM0Y 16):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Digital Marketing Communications: an Introduction | **FK93 34**  |

**HN Business**

**Consultation**

SQA will be carrying out a consultation exercise between September and October 2018 to appraise the HNC and HND Business Group Awards. It is not envisaged that this will lead to a wholesale review of the qualifications, but is intended to identify where updates may be needed to ensure they continue to remain current and reflect the modern environment and challenges faced by business organisations.

Updates are likely to be focused on ASPs, small changes to unit specifications and the inclusion of new optional units; however all feedback from centres will be welcomed. Centres will be contacted for their input in due course.

**IT in Business: Spreadsheets (HH82 34)**

**IT Applications Software 1 (D75X 34)**

Following the revision of IT in Business: Spreadsheets, a new ASP has been developed and published for the combined assessment of these units. It is now available on [SQA’s secure site](https://secure.sqa.org.uk/login.html).

**Piloting Enhancements to HN Qualifications**

The alternative assessments developed as part of the *Piloting Enhancements to HN Qualifications* project will continue to be valid and available for session 2018/19. These are assessments using methodologies more commonly associated with academic degree programmes. The *Enhancements Pilot* assessments available are as follows:

|  |
| --- |
| **Alternative Assessments available via HN ‘Enhancements’ Pilot**  |
| **Economic Issues: An Introduction (F7J8 34)** **Type of assessment**: Reduced (Samples Knowledge and Skills) **Assessment Instrument**: Examination with threshold score **Conditions**: Closed-book with time limit  |
| **Business Law: An Introduction (F84P 34)** **Type of assessment**: Reduced (Samples Knowledge and Skills) **Assessment Instrument**: Examination with threshold score **Conditions**: Closed-book with time limit  |
| **Business Culture and Strategy (F7J7 35)** **Behavioural Skills for Business (F84L 35)** **Type of assessment**: Combined (Assesses two units) **Assessment Instrument**: Structured questions based on case study with threshold score. **Conditions**: Open-book, unsupervised.  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Business: Graded Unit 2 (F8LE 35)** **Research Skills (F60A 34)** **Type of assessment**: Combined (Assesses two units) **Assessment Instrument**: Project Investigation with threshold score and grade banding. **Conditions**: Open-book, unsupervised.  |

For further information please contact hnenhancementpilot@sqa.org.uk

**Units added to Optional Section**

The following units have been added to the optional section of the HNC and HND structures (G9ML 15/G9MM 16):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Management: Leadership at Work | H1F2 34  |
| Digital Marketing Communications: Website Tools and Techniques | HX3V 34 |
| Digital Marketing Communications: Content Development  | HH6C 34 |
| Medical Terminology for Administration Staff | FG61 34 |
| GP Medical Administration | FG63 34 |
| Hospital Patient Administration | FG65 34 |

**HNC/HND Financial Services**These qualifications have been revised and re-validated. The new Group Award codes are:

HNC Financial Services (GP09 15)

HND Financial Services (GP0A 16)

Revisions have been made to five units including the Graded Units. Graded Unit 1 is now exam-based and we have combined Graded Units 2 and 3 into a 2-credit project-based Graded Unit (now Financial Services: Graded Unit 2). The new unit codes for the revised units are:

Financial Sector: An Introduction (HY92 34)

Financial Services: International Transactions (HY93 35) *[previously Financing International Trade]*

Financial Services Regulatory Framework (HY94 35)

Financial Services: Graded Unit 1 (J00P 34)

Financial Services: Graded Unit 2 (J00S 35)

The Group Award Specification (Arrangements Document) is available to download from the subject web page - [HN Financial Services](https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/67626.html). ASPs are available for all of the revised units.

Yours faithfully



Sharon McDowall

Qualifications Manager

English, Languages and Business

1. http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/Finance/scottishapproach/Scottishincometax2018-2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)