

31 May 2010

To: SQA Co-ordinators  
Secondary Schools and FE Colleges

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

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Dear Colleague

### **National Qualifications Drama – Update May 2010**

Please pass this letter to the member of staff responsible for Drama. This letter is an update on new developments and opportunities in Drama in 2010 and contains important information for the start of session 2010/2011.

#### **◆ National Progression Awards (NPAs) in Drama and Technical Theatre**

2010 is the end of a three year development programme during which many new and exciting qualifications in Drama were designed and launched: new NQ Units, two new National Certificates (NCs) and, since April 2010, four new National Progression Awards (NPAs). See section 1 of this letter for Questions and Answers about the new NPAs. Please see also the separate leaflet on the NPAs which is sent out with this letter.

#### **◆ Higher Drama Training Event for Teachers and Lecturers – October 2010**

Following on from the success of the last three year programme of national SQA events for Drama teaching staff, SQA is hosting a one day event on 2 October 2010 with Higher Drama as the focus. See section 2 of this letter for full details.

#### **◆ SQA Website [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)**

The SQA Website has been redesigned. The wealth of support, guidance and advice which exists for the delivery of National Qualifications Drama is still there and has been extended further, but the route to the information is different. See section 3 of this letter for a guide to help you become accustomed to the new-look website, navigate your way around and access information.

If you would like to discuss any of the contents of this letter, please contact Joanna Morris (contact details above) or myself on 0131 561 6811 or email [mary.mcdonald@sqa.org.uk](mailto:mary.mcdonald@sqa.org.uk)

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary McDonald', written in a cursive style.

Mary McDonald  
Qualifications Manager  
National Qualifications

## Section 1

### National Progression Awards (NPAs) in Drama and Technical Theatre

#### Question and Answers

##### What are National Progression Award (NPAs)?

NPAs are small, flexible qualifications with a specific subject focus and comprise groups of SQA National Qualifications (NQ) Units.

##### Who can deliver National Progression Awards?

NPAs can be delivered by schools, colleges or in school/college partnerships.

##### Are these NPAs part of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) qualifications for the future?

No. Although NPAs respond to and endorse the four capacities of CfE, the new qualifications for the future are being developed from 2010-2013 and will be available after that time. These new NPAs in Drama and Technical Theatre are available now – from August 2010.

##### What are the new NPAs in Drama about?

The titles and SQA codes for these new NPAs are listed below. For full details, see framework grids on the following pages and in the separate leaflet sent out with this letter.

- ◆ NPA in Acting and Performance (G9KM 46)
- ◆ NPA in Technical Theatre in Practice (G9KR 46)
- ◆ NPA in Musical Theatre (G9KP 46)
- ◆ NPA in Professional Theatre Preparation (G9KT 46)

All four NPAs above comprise 3 Unit credits. This means that notional delivery time is 3 x 40 hours – 120 hours – which could fit in well with school timetables and college programmes. In addition, some of the NPAs have optional Units which gives great scope for personalisation and choice.

##### What level are the NPAs at?

All four new NPAs are at SCQF level 6, which is Higher level. This doesn't mean that they are replacements for or instead of any other existing qualifications at Higher level – they are new, alternative pathways in the subject.

##### Who can do an NPA?

Again, the keyword here is flexibility: school or college students; adult learners; those interested in employment in a particular area or those already in employment seeking additional CPD in a specific area. National Progression Awards provide a platform which will allow progression to further study or potential employment.

### **Why do an NPA in Drama?**

There are a number of answers here, including:

- ◆ to gain additional knowledge and skills
- ◆ to specialise in particular areas, eg Musical Theatre, Technical Theatre in Practice
- ◆ to integrate with existing qualifications, eg as part of a 2 year route with Higher Drama; as a transition from Intermediate 2 Drama to Higher Drama; as an alternative to Advanced Higher Drama
- ◆ to formalise existing experiences and situations eg, involvement in drama groups and productions; preparing for external auditions
- ◆ to promote engagement in interdisciplinary/cross curricular learning

### **Do you have to complete an NPA in one year?**

No. There can be a number of ways to undertake this, remembering also that any Unit within an NPA can also be delivered on a free-standing or stand alone basis. For example, an NPA could be part of a two year programme – NPAs are flexible in terms of completion date.

### **How is an NPA assessed?**

The Units of an NPA, in common with all NQ Units, are internally assessed in centres who then send Unit results to SQA for processing. Centres themselves decide on Unit completion dates, set times for assessment and retain candidate evidence.

### **What support is there for centres considering delivering an NPA in Drama?**

Start by downloading the Arrangements document from SQA's website and then the Unit Specifications for each of the Units in the NPA. These can also be downloaded from [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk) using the *NQ Unit Search facility*.

A number of Units have accompanying Assessment Support Packs and these can be found on SQA's secure site under *NQGA Subjects, Performing Arts*.

### **Where do we find the general information about this? (we are interested in new Units and NPAs, but for future years)**

Go to [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)  
Click on *Qualifications*  
Click on *NCs and NPAs (NQGA)* from the left hand menu  
Select *Browse NQGA Subjects*  
Select *Performing Arts* from the list of *NQGA subject areas*

Also, if you look on the Drama homepage you will see a number of case studies which will be added to over time. These case studies have been contributed by schools and colleges who have started to use some of the new Drama Units and plan to deliver the NPAs in the future: they provide creative, imaginative and practical ideas for delivering these new qualifications.

## NPA in Acting and Performance

Mandatory Units				
Code			SCQF	Credits
F5LB 12	Drama: Theatre Skills in Performance	Mandatory	6	2
F5L4 12	Professional Theatre in Context	Mandatory	6	1

## NPA in Technical Theatre in Practice

Mandatory Units				
Code			SCQF	Credits
F5L5 12	Technical Theatre in Context	Mandatory	6	1
F697 12	Theatrical Design	Mandatory	6	1
Optional Units – choose one from five				
F693 12	Theatre Stage Lighting Operations	Optional	6	1
F694 12	Theatre Stage Sound Operations	Optional	6	1
F5LE 12	Theatrical Prop Making	Optional	6	1
F58F 12	Creative Project	Optional	6	1
F699 12	Theatre Stage Model Set Construction	Optional	6	1

## NPA in Musical Theatre

Mandatory Units				
Code			SCQF	Credits
F5L0 12	Acting Through Song	Mandatory	6	1
Optional Units – choose two from four				
F5L9 12	Theatre Performers: Solo Singing Skills	Optional	6	1
F5L8 12	Theatre Performers: Group Singing Skills	Optional	6	1
F8LC 12	Group Dance Performance	Optional	6	1
D658 12	Preparation for Audition	Optional	6	1

## NPA in Professional Theatre Preparation

Mandatory Units				
Code			SCQF	Credits
D658 12	Preparation for Audition	Mandatory	6	1
Optional Units – choose one from three				
F5KY 12	Drama: Acting Skills	Optional	6	2
F5LF 12	Drama: Voice Skills	Optional	6	2
F5L1 12	Drama: Movement Skills	Optional	6	2

## Section 2

### Higher Drama Event

SQA's programme of NQ update events and professional development workshops has been a great success since its inception a number of years ago. These events bring teaching colleagues together to learn about SQA assessment standards and how they are applied to specific subject areas and levels – in this case Higher Drama. This event is dedicated to the promotion of understanding and applying assessment standards in the external components of the Higher Drama Course: the Acting examination and the Question Paper.

<b>Date</b>	Saturday 2 October 2010
<b>Venue</b>	Stirling
<b>Cost</b>	No charge
<b>Time</b>	All day event
<b>Who</b>	Open to all teachers and lecturers who deliver Higher Drama or who are considering introducing Higher Drama in their centres

There will be three sessions during the day which all delegates will attend: Acting; Study of Text in its Theatrical Context and Dramatic Commentary; Contemporary Scottish Theatre.

The session on Higher Acting will feature DVD footage of Higher Drama candidates' acting pieces from both Prescribed Text and CST sources. There will be discussion on the rationale and mechanics of assessment and an opportunity for delegates to mark up a range of acting pieces. For the Question Paper sections, candidates' work will be available and detailed assessment rationale will be provided.

In addition, all delegates will receive a very detailed pack for all the Course areas covered at the event which they will be able to take back to their centres to share with staff and use for future reference.

#### How to book a place on this event?

In June, by the end of term, we will be sending an invitation letter and booking form to all schools and colleges (please see your SQA Coordinator). The same information will also be published on SQA's website, on the Drama homepage. The SQA Drama events have been very popular in the past so, if you are interested in attending on 2 October, we would ask you to apply for a place as soon as you can.

We are able to accept one application / **one delegate per centre**. However if more than one colleague per centre would like to apply to come, that name will be added to a reserve list should additional places become available nearer the time. Also, if you book a place and then discover that you are unable to come, please contact SQA to let us know and your place can be offered to another colleague.

## Section 3

### How to navigate SQA's new website

#### 1. How to find subject specific information – NQ

##### Image 1 – SQA home page

Go to [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)

There is now a separate web page for each level in Drama – Access 3 to Advanced Higher. To find the web page for, eg Higher Drama, simply type *Higher Drama* into the 'Subject and Qualification Finder' at the top-right corner of Image 1.

##### Image 2 – Higher Drama home page

The tabs at the bottom of the page contain documents and information relevant to Higher Drama eg,

- ◆ Arrangements Documents
- ◆ External and Internal Assessment Reports
- ◆ Past Papers and Marking Instructions
- ◆ National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials

The circle at the right-hand side of Image 2 indicates the 'Related Information' panel. From here, you can find more general links to the following:

- ◆ Update Letters for Drama
- ◆ Course Reports for Drama
- ◆ Estimates, Absentees and External Assessment Appeals
- ◆ About SCQF Levels

From this page, and all other subject level pages, you can navigate to the generic Drama home page. This page contains general information and updates, eg upcoming events, new qualifications in Drama, etc. To go to this page, click on 'Drama' as circled at the top of Image 2.

#### 2. How to find information on the new Group Awards in Drama

##### Image 3 – All Qualifications page

Go to [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)

- > Click on the 'Qualifications' tab
- > Select the 'All Qualifications' tab (circled)
- > Select 'NQGAs (NCs and NPAs)' (circled)

##### Image 4 – National Qualifications Group Awards page

Click on 'Browse NQGA Subjects' on the left-hand menu (circled). You can then select 'Performing Arts' from the list of NQGA subject areas.

Image 1 – SQA home page

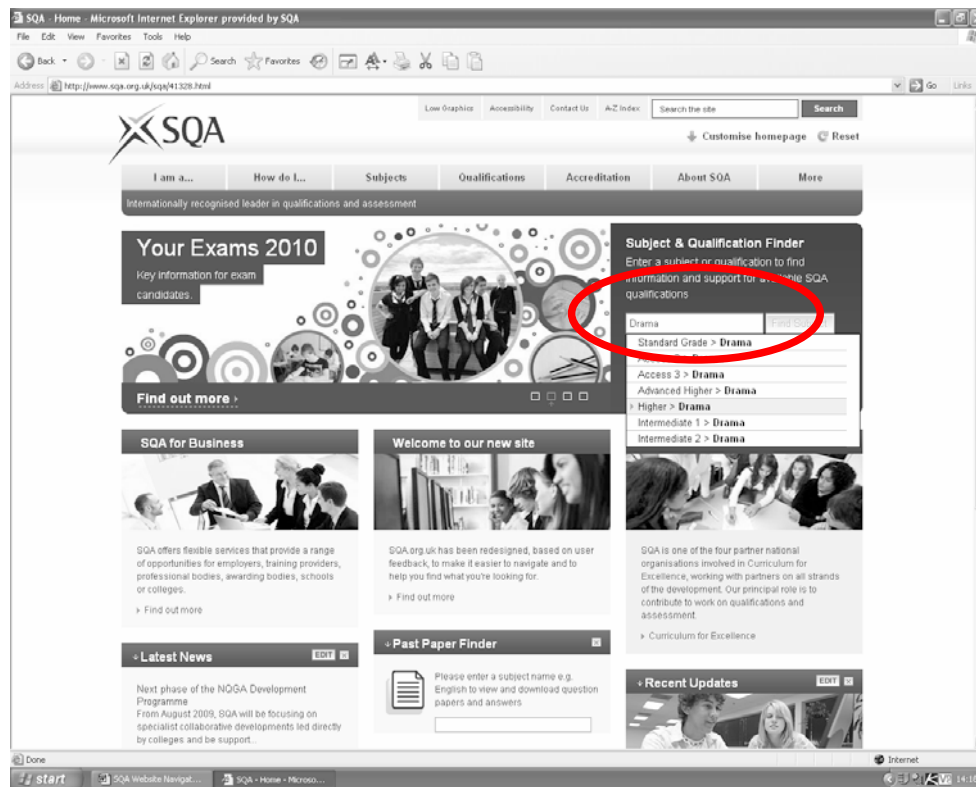


Image 2 – Higher Drama home page

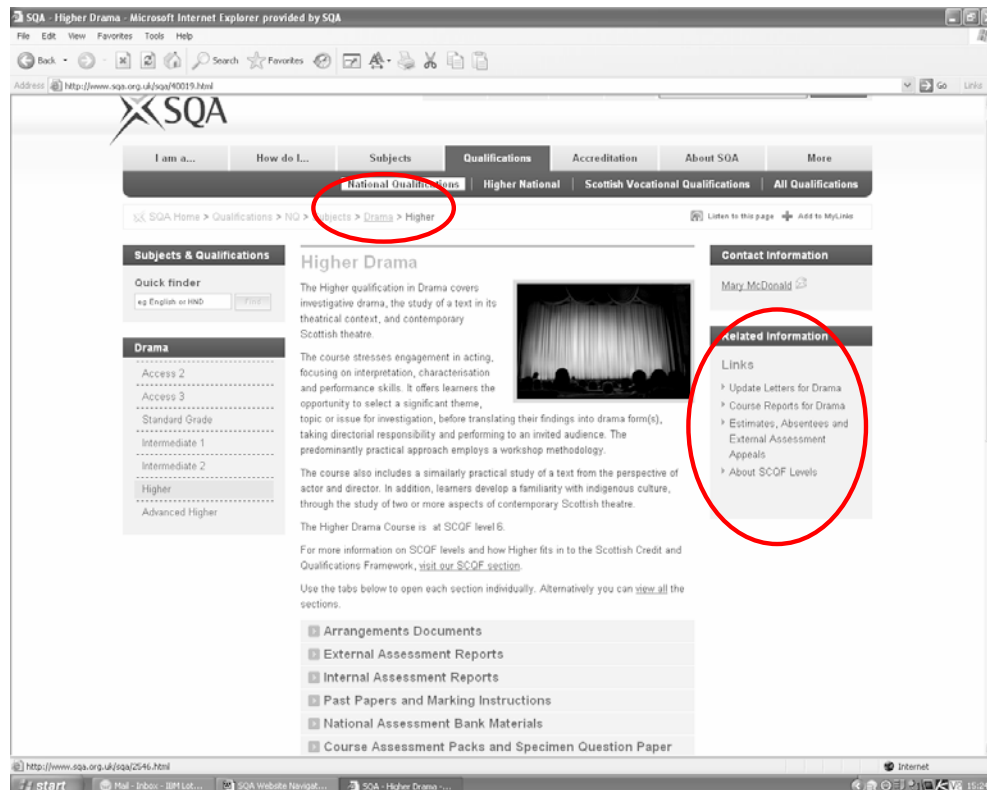


Image 3 – All Qualifications page

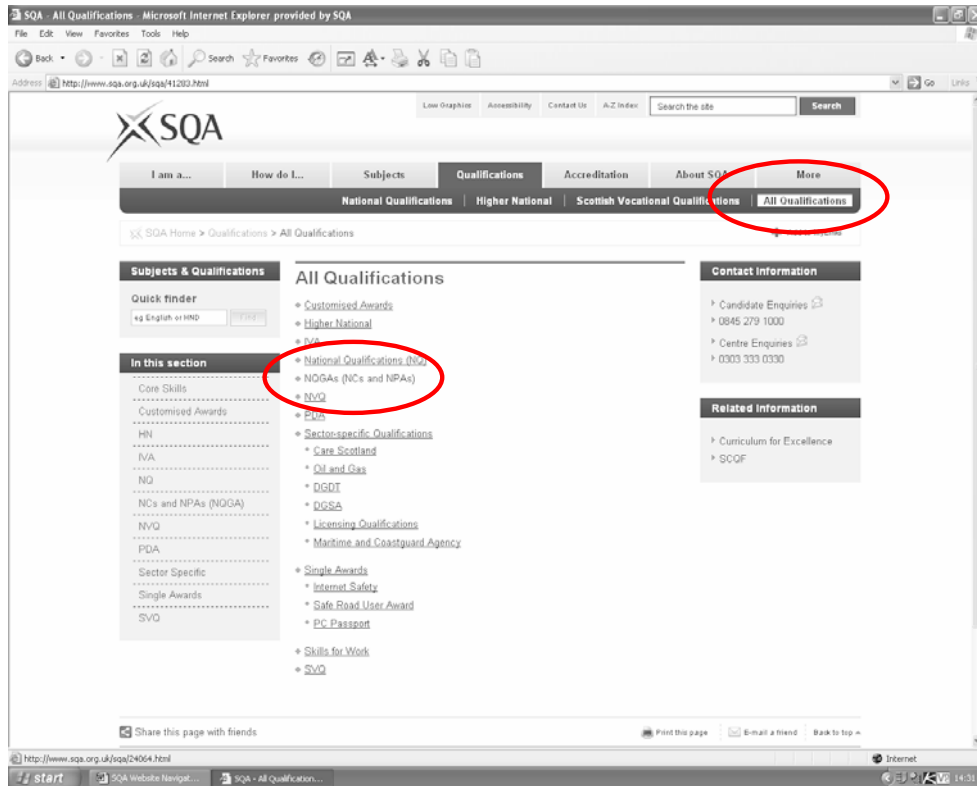


Image 4 – National Qualifications Group Awards page

