

21 January 2011

To: SQA Co-ordinator (secondary schools,
special schools and further education colleges
HMIE
Directors of Education
Higher Education Institutions — Department of Education

**For the attention of all staff responsible for the delivery of
National Qualifications in Managing Environmental Resources**

Action by Recipient	
	Response required
✓	Note and pass on
	Note — update/information only

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications update — Managing Environmental Resources

This letter provides an update on National Qualifications and should be passed to the member of staff responsible for Managing Environmental Resources (MER).

The following items are included:

- 1 Managing Environmental Resources Access to Higher levels event
- 2 Local Networks
- 3 Increased uptake
- 4 Revision to Higher NABs
- 5 External Assessment Reports
- 6 Curriculum for Excellence proposals

1 Managing Environmental Resources Access to Higher levels event

This is a joint Scotland's Colleges/SQA Academy Course being held on **Thursday 3rd February**. To gain access you will first need to register on the Scotland's Colleges website:

<http://events.scotlandscolleges.ac.uk/events/show/3811>

The course uses the blended learning approach with both online and face-to-face learning activities. Delegates are provided with many opportunities to reflect on their learning and teaching practice in a supported environment whilst gaining accreditation for CPD hours. Throughout the course and beyond the focus is on the impact this professional development activity will have on the learners' experience.

2 Local networks

I am hoping to run a couple of local networks before the end of March. These are short meetings to share ideas and meet colleagues involved in MER. There is no charge to attend and they usually take place out with school hours. One has already been held at Belmont Academy hosted by Mr Iain Aitken. Due to the number of presenting centres, I am liaising with colleagues to see if any more can be held in other suitable locations.

3 Increased uptake

The number of entries at Intermediate and Higher levels has almost doubled since 2009. In 2009 the total number of entries for all levels was around 200, in 2010 the number was 350 and entries up to the middle of January are currently over 500.

4 Revision to Higher NABs

The higher NABs will be revised/updated over the coming months and I anticipate that they will be ready by September on the secure website. Where NABs have been revised it is recommended that they are used.

There currently is a minor error in unit 3 - D312 where the total marks available 41 instead of the published 40. A threshold mark of 26 should still be applied. I apologise for this error.

5 External Assessment Reports

The MER External Assessment Reports are available on the MER page of SQA's website.

The reports provide information on candidate performance in the 2010 examination diet, including grade boundaries, distribution of awards, which areas candidates have performed well in and which areas they have found demanding as well as detailed advice to centres for the presentation of future candidates.

6 Curriculum for Excellence proposals

The new Curriculum for Excellence proposes a suite of qualifications called Environmental Sciences. To read more information about this, there is a document on our website, called Overview of Qualifications in the Sciences curriculum area. Follow this link - <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/42546.html>

I hope you find the information in this letter helpful. Should you require any further information or wish to submit comments or suggestions regarding MER qualifications please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elaine Riley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'E' and 'R'.

Elaine Riley
Qualifications Manager
Science & Technology