Arrangements for:

Professional Development Award

in

Administrative Management

Group Award Code: G8XY 48

Validation date: May 2008

Date of original publication: May 2008

Version: 01

Acknowledgement

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification, and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below.

Version number	Description	Date	Authorised by

Contents

1 Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the new Professional Development Award in Administrative Management which was validated in May 2008. This document includes: background information on the development of the Group Award, its aims, guidance on access, details of the Group Award structure, and guidance on delivery.

Following the introduction of the HNC and HND Administration and Information Technology and the subsequent review of the design principles for Professional Development Awards, the need for qualifications at various SCQF levels for those in employment became apparent. Overall, the number of candidates following a full-time HNC and a subsequent HND programme has decreased with many candidates entering employment at HNC level. Very few centres offer the HND on a part-time basis, yet acknowledge that there are aspects of the HNC and HND which are essential for those who wish to progress to higher level administrative roles.

Additionally many potential candidates holding senior administrative posts may have qualifications in other areas eg IT, business or a general arts degree and have little or no qualifications in administration. With more organisations dealing with Investors in People accreditation, the availability of certificated courses to offer staff as part of their continuing professional development is of increasing importance. This new Professional Development Award allows candidates to develop their administrative skills and progress to study at SCQF level 8.

2 Rationale for the development of the award

The purpose of this Group Award is to provide a qualification which overtakes the key competencies required for employment in a senior administrative role. Key competencies required by employers have been identified through extensive market research as:

♦ provision of management support for meetings, events and projects. This includes managing schedules and client relationships, organising events and the preparation of statistical and financial information.
♦ demonstration of high level interpersonal skills including flexibility and problem solving, working as part of a team as well as working on own initiative and being able to motivate others.
♦ high level IT skills.

Market research was carried out in two stages. The first stage was through predominantly secondary market research using newspaper advertisements, job descriptions and reports, in particular the Report on Research into Part-time Business Provision in Further Education (Jane Kerr and Caroline Patterson January 2007) which concluded that:

♦ opportunities to offer training in more flexible ways than those currently on offer — this can be done through workplace or centre delivery with evidence being drawn from workplace or centre-provided evidence
♦ continuing professional development needs which include soft skills provision — the incorporation of the new Unit *Administrative Management — Personal Skills*

- ♦ opportunities to create provision which would act as building blocks towards HND and link with Occupational Standards — the Units from the proposed PDA could be incorporated in the HND framework.

Job advertisements and job descriptions revealed that the following were the requirements for jobs at this level:

- ♦ good IT skills — Word, Excel, PowerPoint and databases were mentioned (in descending order of mention/importance)
- ♦ providing management support such as:
  - — managing schedules
  - — preparing for meetings
  - — preparing statistical and financial information
  - — allocating work to colleagues
  - — organising events
  - — co-ordinating projects
  - — building client relationships
  - — demonstrating high level communication skills

In terms of personal skills required for senior administrative posts, the ability to demonstrate high level interpersonal skills was rated highly through:

- ♦ being able to motivate others and showing a high level of personal motivation
- ♦ working on own initiative
- ♦ working as part of a team
- ♦ high level of personal presentation and close attention to detail
- ♦ flexibility in approaches to problem solving

The second stage market research was through questionnaires issued to those employed in senior administrative roles and those responsible for employing and training them. They were asked to comment on proposals and identify any missing areas. The responses were very positive from both groups. Some minor changes were made to the proposal in the light of comments received such as the inclusion of Human Resource Management options.

The mandatory Units of this qualification address the key personal skills and administrative skills required by personnel operating at a senior administrative level. Many of these skills will be developed over a period of time through experience in the workplace and cognisance is taken of this in this award by allowing candidates to demonstrate their competence through the compilation of a portfolio of workplace evidence. Where workplace evidence is not appropriate or not possible, assessment can be through case study materials. In reality for those in employment assessment evidence is likely to comprise a mixture of these two methods. This approach allows a focussed qualification which will meet employer needs.

The level of this award is SCQF level 8 and a minimum of 32 SCQF credit points out of a total of 48 SCQF credit points in the award, are at SCQF level 8. The content of the award matches the descriptors for SCQF level 8. Further information on mapping is shown in Section 5.2 where mapping information is referenced in Appendix 1.

Overall the qualification is aimed to provide:

♦ a continuing professional development programme at SCQF level 8 for experienced staff
♦ provide an alternative to HND study which is difficult to achieve on a part-time basis
♦ encourage expansion of provision in the sector and subject area

Not only does this qualification provide those in employment with up-to-date certification and therefore allow increased job mobility, it can be used to build on the HNC Administration and Information Technology or a group of HN Units with similar content. It can also act as a stepping stone between the HNC and the HND Administration and Information Technology. Links to other qualifications are detailed in Section 5.2 where mapping is referenced in Appendix 2.

The award has a close relationship to the National Occupational Standards for Business and Administration in particular SVQ level 4. This is detailed in Section 5.2 and mapped in Appendix 3.

3 Aims of the award

Due to the varied nature of job roles in senior administrative positions, it is important that transferable skills such as Core Skills — *Communication, Numeracy, Information Technology, Working with Others* and *Problem Solving* are developed throughout the award and taken into account in the aims. Additionally transferable skills are developed such as project management skills, planning skills, evaluative skills, team working skills and customer care skills. Full mapping of these skills as well as the following aims is shown in Appendix 4.

3.1 General aims of the award

1 To enable progression within the SCQF framework.
2 To provide a certificated progression pathway for continuing professional development for those in employment.

3.2 Specific aims of the award

1 To enable candidates to develop administrative skills to an advanced level to support management.
2 To enable candidates to develop the personal skills required by those in a senior administrative role.
3 To provide a viable progression route for part-time candidates from SCQF level 7 (HNC or equivalent) to SCQF level 8.
4 To provide a progression route for those preparing for or returning to employment.
5 To develop transferable skills which will benefit candidates in a senior administrative role.

3.3 Target groups

The target audience for this qualification would be:

♦ those candidates who, having completed an HNC, do not wish to undertake a full HND. This PDA would be an alternative qualification at SCQF level 8. Ideally centres offering the award to candidates who have recently achieved the HNC, should endeavour to provide work experience as part of any course of study offered as this would enhance the candidate's learning experience.
♦ those who have gained experience and competence within their job roles but do not have certification for those skills.
♦ those who are returning to employment but already had significant experience in the administrative area.
♦ those who have recently progressed to a senior administrative role and wish to progress in their studies.

3.4 Employment opportunities

Candidates who undertake this award could expect increased employment opportunities to a higher level eg to a Personal Assistant role, Executive Assistant role or Office Manager role. The qualification would also provide those in employment with up-to-date certification which in turn would allow increased job mobility.

Additionally the qualification could be used to build on the HNC Administration and Information Technology or a group of HN Units with similar content. It could also act as a stepping stone between the HNC and the HND Administration and Information Technology.

4 Access to awards

Access to this award is at the discretion of the centre. However, the following examples provide guidance on what is considered to be knowledge and/or experience appropriate for entry.

♦ communication skills at SCQF level 6 or equivalent
♦ current work experience in administrative work and appropriate transferable skills
♦ HNC in Administration and Information Technology or similar qualification at SCQF level 7
♦ SVQ level 3/4 in Administration
♦ where candidates are from overseas, it is envisaged that equivalent qualifications or competencies are identified and deemed appropriate by the delivering centre.

In addition, candidates should be proficient in IT in common software applications used in administration — ie word processing software, presentation software, spreadsheets, e-mail, electronic diaries, internet, management of electronic files and use of databases to SCQF level 7 or equivalent

The access statements made above are there to outline the qualifications and/or experience that potential candidates would normally possess before embarking on the PDA. As candidates will come from a wide range of backgrounds, centres are advised to interview candidates individually before they embark on a course of study. For example centres should ensure that candidates who have limited administrative experience and do not possess an HNC Administration and Information Technology have the underpinning skills recommended in each of the Unit specifications before undertaking a programme of study. This may result in the need for individualised timetabling to bridge any apparent gaps. Particular attention should be paid to IT skills and Communication skills. Candidates without up-to-date experience in IT would be advised to undertake the following Units prior to starting the PDA

DE1L 34   *IT in Business — Word Processing and Presentation Applications*
DE1M 34   *IT in business — Spreadsheet*
DE1N 34   *IT in Business — Database*

5   Award structure

The award is made up of two mandatory Units and a series of optional Units. Successful candidates require to achieve both mandatory Units and will require to achieve 16 further SCQF credit points from the options listed. In total candidates would require to gain six SQA Units (48 SCQF credit points). The majority of these SCQF points would be at SCQF level 8 (the mandatory section having 4 SQA credits, all of which are at SCQF level 8).

5.1   Framework

Unit title	Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit value
Administrative Management: Personal Skills	F3FL 35	16	8	2
Managing Administrative Services	F3FM 35	16	8	2
Total Mandatory Units		**32**		**4**
Optional Units — 2 SQA credits (16 SCQF credit points) from the following:				
Presentation Skills	DE20 35	8	8	1
IT in Business — Advanced Spreadsheets	DE1V 35	8	8	1
IT in Business — Advanced Databases	DE1W 35	8	8	1
Business Information Management	DE1Y 35	8	8	1
Project Management	D76J 35	8	8	1
Preparing Financial Forecasts	DE3J 35	8	8	1
Statistics for Business	DE3M 35	8	8	1
Developing the Individual within a Team	DF46 35	8	8	1
Creating a Culture of Customer Care	DJ42 34	8	7	1
Human Resource Management: Introduction	DN78 34	8	7	1
Human Resource Management: Core Activities	DN72 34	16	7	2
Total optional Units		**16**		**2**

5.2   Mapping information

This award is fully mapped as follows:

♦   Appendix 1 showing the links between the mandatory Units and SCQF level 8 descriptors
♦   Appendix 2 showing the links with other SQA qualifications
♦   Appendix 3 showing the links between SVQ level 4 National Occupational Standards and the award
♦   Appendix 4 showing the links between the Units in the award and the aims, Core Skills and transferable skills

5.3   Articulation, professional recognition and credit transfer

Candidates who complete this award could go on to undertake the full HND Administration and Information Technology.

The two mandatory Units in the award have been written for this award and there is no equivalent credit transfer. The optional Units are taken largely from the HNC/HND Administration and Information Technology and the HNC/HND Business and any credit transfer arrangements for individual Units which have been gained prior to 2003 can be found in the Arrangements Documents for these awards. Centres should ensure that candidates can demonstrate current competence.

6   Approaches to delivery and assessment

It is envisaged that the two Units which comprise the mandatory section would be delivered on a lecture/workshop basis. The delivery time is likely to account for approximately 25% of the time allocated for the Unit, leaving sufficient time for candidates to gather evidence from their own workplaces and compile their portfolio of evidence with advice being available from their tutor. Alternatively candidates could be given complex case study materials which could form the basis of their assessment evidence. Portfolio compilation enables a less restrictive approach to assessment and will encourage candidates to relate their learning to their own work environment.

Where candidates are providing evidence from the workplace, tutors should be prepared to visit the workplaces concerned and should include evidence of authentication of candidate evidence as part of the process eg witness testimony, interviews with other members of staff. Additionally tutors should ensure that any information which is included is not regarded by the organisation as sensitive. Sensitive information could be made secure by the organisation but could be scrutinised in the workplace by the tutor. Candidates may wish to submit evidence in electronic format and this is especially relevant where bulky files or multiple files are involved.

Potential sources of evidence should be fully discussed with tutors and presenting centres should make it clear to candidates that the decision as to suitability of evidence belongs with the centre.

The optional Units are from different subject areas and there are already support materials available for these Units. These Units are more likely to be delivered in a traditional or open-learning format.

The following Assessment Exemplar Packs are currently available for the following Units:

Unit title	Unit code
Presentation Skills	DE20 35
IT in Business — Advanced Spreadsheets	DE1V 35
IT in Business — Advanced Databases	DE1W 35
Business Information Management	DE1Y 35
Project Management	D76J 35
Preparing Financial Forecasts	DE3J 35
Statistics for Business	DE3M 35
Developing the Individual within a Team	DF46 35
Creating a Culture of Customer Care	DJ42 34
Human Resource Management: Introduction	DN78 34

Assessment exemplars will also be available for the mandatory Units in the award.

Delivery pattern 1

This award is likely to be delivered on a part-time basis. Centres should try to deliver the two mandatory Units at the same time and could consider the following alternatives as approaches to flexible delivery.

Lecture and workshop sessions for the two mandatory Units for 20 hours for each Unit.

Standard delivery pattern of 40 hours nominal delivery and assessment for optional Units. This would allow 13 weeks attendance at the delivering centre for one block allowing 3 hour teaching sessions.

Tutor support would then be available for candidates on a drop-in or work-based arrangement.

Delivery pattern 2

A more traditional approach could be taken using the following delivery plan.

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3
Administrative Management: Personal Skills	Administrative Management: Personal Skills	Option
Managing Administrative Services	Managing Administrative Services	Option

Delivering the mandatory Units at the same time would enhance the opportunities for integration of assessment evidence.

Throughout delivery, particularly of the mandatory Units, every effort should be made to ensure that Core Skills are developed. Full details are given in the Guidance Sections of the Units and centres are advised to ensure that development of Core Skills is included in part of the lesson planning documentation completed by centres at Approval.

7 General information for centres

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (**www.sqa.org.uk**).

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these Group Award(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education* (**www.sqa.org.uk**).

8 General information for candidates

Undertaking this award will help you to gain the personal and administrative skills to progress in your career in administration. The content of the qualification is based on feedback from employers and those in employment in jobs such as office managers, personal assistants and other senior administrative support jobs. The qualification is made up of Units.

There are two mandatory Units in the award and you have to study both of these Units. One of these is all about developing your personal skills. Here you would develop skills in time management, planning and scoping work, researching and presenting information, motivating others and acting assertively. As a result you would become more confident in doing things using your own initiative and in being more flexible in your approach to your work. The other mandatory Unit is all about developing your administrative management skills and this will help you to learn about maintaining systems for managing resources, quality control and quality improvement and budgets. It also includes an Outcome on your contribution to induction and training and development and another Outcome about organising and supporting events and meetings.

In addition to these mandatory Units you will have a choice of optional Units and you will have to undertake the equivalent of 16 SCQF credit points or 2 SQA credits to gain the full award. You can choose options in subjects like advanced IT applications, human resources, customer care or project management and you would be best to discuss your options with your employer (if you are currently employed) and the centre offering the award, before you decide what Units to study.

In addition all of these Units will develop your Core Skills — *Communication* skills, *Numeracy* skills, *Information Technology* skills, the skill of *Working with Others* and *Problem Solving* skills. These skills are important to employers. Additionally other transferable skills will be developed in undertaking this award. Skills such as project management skills, planning skills, evaluative skills, team working skills and customer care skills will all be developed during your studies.

The Units you study will all be assessed. Your assessments might use case studies, role-plays, a portfolio of evidence built up from your workplace, practical exercises given by your tutor or questions you have to answer. You will get the opportunity to practice your new learning before you are assessed and you will be told early in the Unit what you will be expected to do to pass.

Successful completion of the qualification should help you gain employment in a senior administrative role. The kind of jobs you would hope to gain would be senior administrative posts such as a personal assistant, an office manager, an office supervisor or a private secretary. If you wanted to continue to further study, you would have gained some Units towards the achievement of an HND. You might also decide to undertake a further Professional Development Award at a higher SCQF level.

9   Glossary of terms

SCQF: This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at **www.scqf.org.uk**

SCQF credit points: One HN credit is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points. This applies to all HN Units, irrespective of their level.

SCQF levels: The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HN Units will normally be at levels 6–9. Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8.

Subject Unit: Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Graded Unit: Graded Units assess candidates' ability to integrate what they have learned while working towards the Units of the Group Award. Their purpose is to add value to the Group Award, making it more than the sum of its parts, and to encourage candidates to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

Dedicated Core Skill Unit: This is a Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills, eg HN Units in Information Technology or Communications.

Embedded Core Skills: This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

Signposted Core Skills: This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie outwith automatic certification.

Qualification Design Team: The QDT works in conjunction with a Qualification Manager/Development Manager to steer the development of the HNC/D from its inception/revision through to validation. The group is made up of key stakeholders representing the interests of centres, employers, universities and other relevant organisations.

Consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.

Specialist single centre and specialist collaborative devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions led by a single centre or small group of centres who provide knowledge and skills in a specialist area. Like consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs, these developments or revisions will also be supported by SQA.

10   Appendices

Appendix 1: Mapping of mandatory Units to SCQF level 8 descriptors
Appendix 2: Flowchart showing links to other Administration qualifications
Appendix 3: Links between level 4 National Occupational Standards
Appendix 4: Links to aims, Core Skills and transferable skills

Appendix 1: Mapping of mandatory Units to SCQF level 8

Key:

MAS: Managing Administrative Services
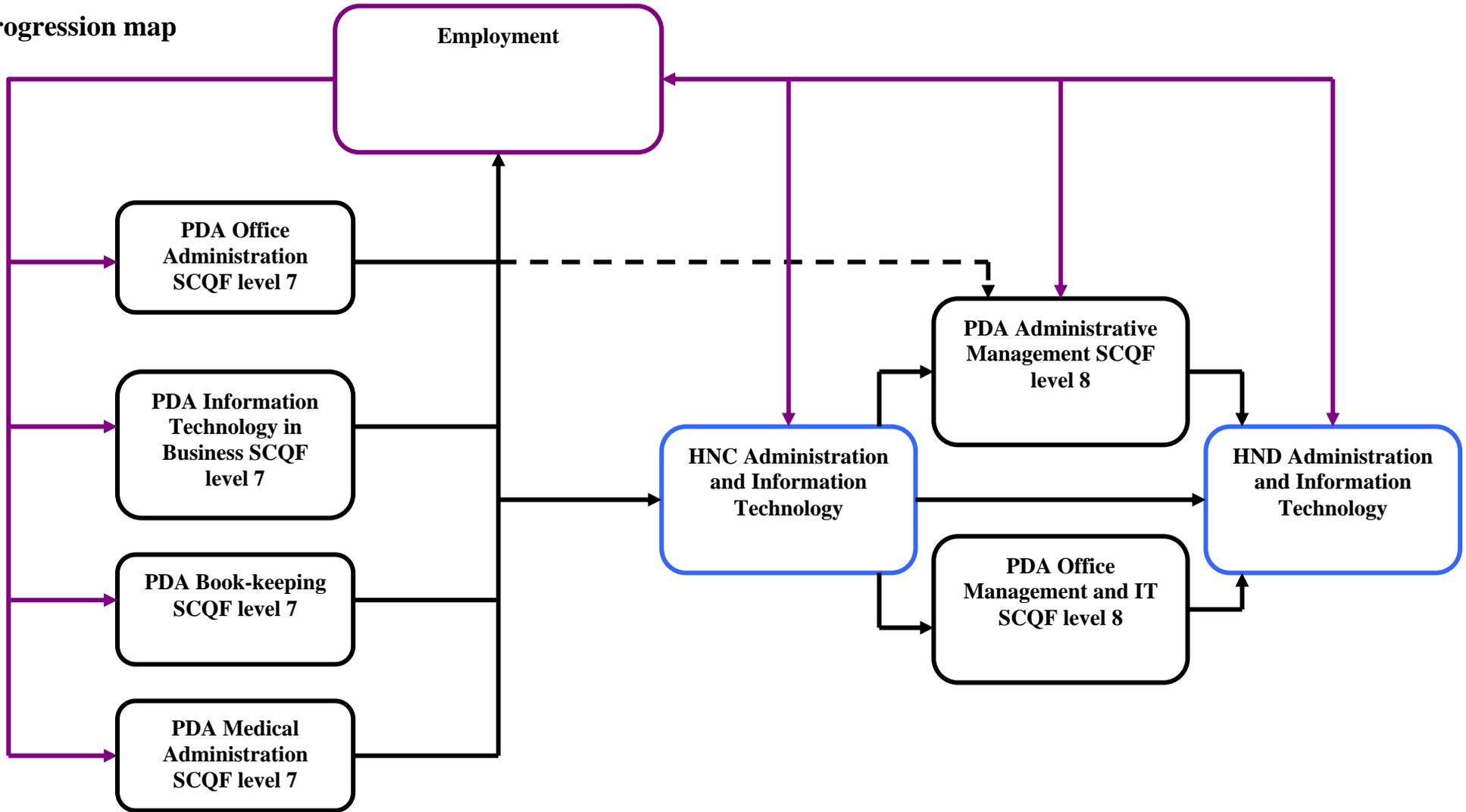AMPS: Administrative Management Personal Skills

(The numbers shown relate to the Outcomes)

Level Descriptor		Unit MAS	Unit AMPS
Knowledge and Understanding	Candidates are expected to have:		
	♦ a broad knowledge of the scope, defining features and main subject areas of a subject/discipline	1, 2	1, 2, 3, 4
	♦ a detailed knowledge in some areas	2, 3, 4	2, 3
	♦ understanding of a limited range of core theories, principles and concepts	2, 3, 4, 5	1, 4
	♦ a limited knowledge and understanding of some major current issues and specialisms	2, 4, 5	4, 5
	♦ an outline knowledge and understanding of research and equivalent scholarly/ academic processes	5	3, 4
Practice: Applied knowledge and understanding	Candidates are expected to:		
	♦ use a range of routine skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with a subject/discipline, a few of which are advanced or complex	1, 2, 3	2, 3
	♦ carry out routine lines of enquiry, development or investigation into professional level problems and issues	3, 4	2, 3
	♦ adapt routine practices within accepted standards	1, 3	4, 5
Generic Cognitive Skills	Candidates are expected to:		
	♦ undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues which are within the common understandings of the subject/discipline	1, 2, 4, 5	2, 3
	♦ use a range of approaches to formulate evidence-based solutions/responses to defined and/or routine problems/issues	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2, 3
	♦ critically evaluated evidence-based solutions/responses to defined and/or routine problems/issues	1, 4	2, 3, 4, 5

Level Descriptor		Unit MAS	Unit AMPS
Communications, ICT and Numeracy skills	Use a range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills associated with a subject/discipline, for example:		
	♦ convey complex information to a range of audiences and for a range of purposes	5	1, 3, 4, 5
	♦ use a range of standard applications to process and obtain data	2, 3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4
	♦ use and evaluate numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/targets	3, 4, 5	3
Autonomy, accountability and Working with Others	♦ exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level	1	4, 5
	♦ take a significant managerial or supervisory responsibility for the work of others in defined areas of work	2	1, 4, 5
	♦ manage resources within defined areas of work	1, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
	♦ take the lead on planning in familiar or defined contexts	2, 3, 5	1, 2, 3
	♦ take continuing account of own and others' roles, responsibilities and contributions in carrying out and evaluating tasks	2, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
	♦ work in support of current professional practice under guidance	3, 5	4
	♦ deal with ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices under guidance	2, 3, 4	4, 5

Appendix 2: Professional Development Awards in Administration

Progression map

Appendix 3: Links between level 4 SVQs for Business and Administration

Mandatory Units	Links to NOS
Administrative Management: Personal Skills	401, 402, 310, 407, 411, 412, 414, 415, 418
Managing Administrative Services	310, 401, 402, 403, 406, 408, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415,
Presentation Skills	310, 401,
IT in Business — Advanced Spreadsheets	310, 407, 410,
IT in Business — Advanced Databases	310, 407, 410,
Business Information Management	407
Project Management	404, 405, 409, 411, 415
Preparing Financial Forecasts	310, 402, 405
Statistics for Business	310, 402, 406
Developing the Individual within a Team	401, 402, 407, 414
Creating a Culture of Customer Care	305, 401, 402, 407
Human Resource Management: Introduction	416, 417, 418
Human Resource Management: Core Activities	416, 417, 418

Appendix 4: Links to aims, Core Skills and transferable skills

The table below shows where the aims are overtaken by the constituent Units in the award. It also shows what Core Skills are developed and to what level in each Unit as well as where transferable skills identified above are overtaken. **Note** some Units were written before Core Skills mapping was required. Where this is the case Core Skills developed are shown in italics and no level is given.

Key:

Core Skills

C	Communication	IT	Information Technology
WWO	Working with Others	PS	Problem Solving
N	Numeracy		

E =	Embedded	
S =	Signposted	SCQF level 4, 5 or 6 indicated

(For example: C 5E means Communications at SCQF level 5 Embedded)

Transferable skills

Project management skills	PM
Planning skills	PL
Evaluative skills	EV
Team working skills	TW
Customer care skills	CC

Mandatory Units	Aims	Core Skills	Transferable skills
Administrative Management: Personal Skills	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	PS 6S IT 6S C 6S WWO 6S N 5S	PM PL EV TW CC
Managing Administrative Services	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	PS 6S IT 6S C 6S WWO 6S	PM PL EV TW CC
Presentation Skills	1	*C, PS*	PL, EV
IT in Business — Advanced Spreadsheets	1	*N, PS, IT*	PM, PL
IT in Business — Advanced Databases	1	*PS, N, IT*	PM, PL, EV
Business Information Management	1	*IT*	EV
Project Management	1	*PS, N*	PM, PL, EV
Preparing Financial Forecasts	1	*N*	PL, EV
Statistics for Business	1	N 6E	EV
Developing the Individual within a Team	1	WWO 6E	PL, EV
Creating a Culture of Customer Care	1	C 5S, PS 5S	CC, EV,
Human Resource Management: Introduction	1	*C*	EV
Human Resource Management: Core Activities	3	*C*	EV