Arrangements for:

National Progression Award (NPA) in Social Software SCQF level 4

Group Award Code: G9J4 44

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Version: 03

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
03	DN81 11 Weblogs *has been revised by* H60D 45 Weblogs *and will finish on* 31/07/2016.	12/11/2014
02	Revision of Internet Safety (F0H5 10)(lapse date 31/07/2012,finish date 31/07/2014)	25/09/2012

Contents

1　Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the new National Progression Award in Social Software at SCQF level 4 which was validated in June 2009. 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.

This is one of a group of NPAs which incorporate Units from the National Certificate in Digital Media Computing. The entire group is as follows:

1　NPA Software Development (SCQF 4)
2　NPA Social Software (SCQF 4)
3　NPA Website Enterprise (SCQF 5)
4　NPA Computer Networks and Systems (SCQF 5)
5　NPA Computers and Digital Photography (SCQF 5)
6　NPA Digital Media Production (SCQF Level 6)

The National Progression Award (NPA) in Social Software consists of three NQ Units drawn from the framework of the National Certificate in Digital Media Computing at SCQF level 4. It provides progression for candidates who wish to develop their knowledge and skills of safe and effective use of the internet as a resource and make effective use of social software, including weblogs.

Candidates will study three Units which will allow them to:

♦　make safe and legal use of the internet
♦　use social software for interaction and collaboration
♦　find, review and create weblogs

With the increasing use of the internet for business purposes (eg sales, purchases, marketing) employers are looking to their staff to have basic IT skills that include the ability to use the internet. As a result, the further education and community education sectors have seen a corresponding increase in demand for entry qualifications in aspects of the internet.

Along with the rapid growth in the use of the internet there are increasing risks — to young people, to individuals and to businesses. While these risks are well publicised in the media, it is important that individuals should have better understanding and skills of protecting themselves and others from harmful internet activity. Education Authorities in Scotland have developed short educational programmes to inform school pupils of the dangers of the internet, supported by information for parents.

A recent HMIE report ['Improving Scottish Education: ICT in learning and teaching', HMIE 2007] found that almost all pupils in schools lacked the skills of efficient searching, selection and analysis required to make effective use of information accessed through the internet. Research into the skills most valued by employers, carried out by e-skills UK (the sector skills council for IT) found that employers rated internet skills highly. The National Occupational Standards (NOS) for IT Users, created by e-skills UK in partnership with employers, provide detail of the internet skills required in the workplace. These Units will develop candidate skills in line with the NOS.

This NPA will offer candidates a foundation in making safe and legal use of the internet in carrying out research and handling information. The award will also

introduce candidates to a range of internet tools to access, retrieve and exchange information from the internet and use social software to support interaction and collaboration with other individuals or groups. This award is suitable for a wide range of candidates — from secondary school pupils through to the 'silver surfer' generation. It will be beneficial to candidates in employment as well as those wishing to acquire skills to enter or re-enter the workplace.

The award is composed of Units which form part of the National Certificate awards in Digital Media Computing and is a meaningful qualification in its own right. Candidates for the NC Digital Media Computing awards have the opportunity to be certificated for these NPA awards depending on their choice of Units within their programme. Conversely, candidates who achieve an NPA award will have SCQF credits that can count towards the NC DMC awards.

2 Rationale for the development of the Group Award

2.1 Nature and purpose of the award

The rationale for developing the National Progression Award (NPA) Social Software at SCQF level 4 is to address a demand for provision of an entry-level qualification into the use of social software, emphasising the importance of safe use of the internet.

Use of the internet has grown to the extent that over half the households in the UK have access to it at home and some 80% of businesses make use of it. In recent years the government has made clear its intention that its citizens should have access to information, advice and support from government bodies and local councils in electronic form through the internet. It has funded a range of initiatives to improve the infrastructure for public access to the internet, in community centres, libraries, shops and other public places. Along with this it has recognised the need for education and training for citizens in the effective use of the internet, and has funded opportunities for basic training in the use of the internet.

2.2 Need for the qualification — summary of results of market research

Market research was originally carried out in 2007 whereby 82 centres responded. Up-to-date market research was carried out between February and April 2009, for nine proposed NPAs. A larger and wider range of respondents participated. There was a 51% increase of respondents from education, and industry was involved this time:

♦ 101 members of staff from secondary schools
♦ 58 members of staff from colleges
♦ 2 members of staff from training providers
♦ 7 members of staff from other educational establishments
♦ 18 employers in Scotland

The surveys focused on the need for these qualifications and the suitability of their content. Responses were very favourable with 93.1% of respondents from education and 55.6% from industry supporting the need for the NPA in Social Software.

The individual Units that make up the National Progression Award in Social Software at SCQF level 4 have been matched against the National Occupational Standards in Interactive Media published by the sector skills council, e-skills.

National Progression Awards are new for the sector and research was carried out through an online questionnaire which shows that FE colleges and schools were very positive about these new NPA awards. Individual practitioners were welcomed in the form of an open-ended question to offer feedback to help shape these new NPAs.

An online survey was sent to a number of employers in the digital media field. The results show that employers were very positive about these new NPA awards. Individual comments were welcomed to help shape these new NPAs.

The colleges, schools and private providers agreed with the opinions of the employers regarding content, level and structure of the award.

The group was surveyed for their views on a number of NPAs that are being developed and the feedback was very positive. This sample of training providers who could be potential deliverers of the award indicated that between them they were likely to be able to serve a considerable number of candidates.

The Sectors Skills Council has indicated support for the proposed course because it addresses sectoral needs which they had already identified. The organisations offered support in course design.

2.3   How the award meets the criteria for SCQF level 4

The level of this award is SCQF level 4 as 12 SCQF credit points available are at SCQF level 4. The total amount of credit points available for the Group Award is 18. This meets the criteria required by the design principles of NPA (ie at least half of the SCQF credit points are at the level of the Group Award).

SCQF Level Descriptor 4

Knowledge and Understanding	Candidates are expected to demonstrate and/or work with: ♦ basic knowledge in a subject discipline which is mainly factual ♦ some simple facts and ideas about, and associated with, a subject/discipline ♦ knowledge of basic processes, materials and terminology
Practice: Applied knowledge and understanding	Candidates are expected to: ♦ relate knowledge to personal and/or practical contexts ♦ use a few skills to complete straightforward tasks with some non-routine elements ♦ select and use, with guidance, appropriate tools and materials safely and effectively
Generic Cognitive Skills	Candidates are expected to: ♦ use, with guidance, given stages of a problem solving approach to deal with a situation or issue ♦ operate in straightforward contexts ♦ identify and/or take account of some of the consequences of action/inaction.
Communication,	Use straightforward skills, for example:

ICT and Numeracy skills	♦ produce and respond to simple but detailed written and oral communication in familiar contexts ♦ use the most straightforward features of familiar applications to process and obtain information ♦ use straightforward numerical and graphical data in straightforward and familiar contexts
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	♦ work alone or with others on straightforward tasks ♦ contribute to the setting of goals, timelines, etc ♦ contribute to the review of completed work and offer suggestions for improving practices and processes ♦ Identify own strengths and weaknesses relative to the work

3 Aims of the Group Award

This award is new and does not replace any existing award. It provides an opportunity for candidates to group together Units relating to the theme of the internet at SCQF level 4.

The general aim of these awards is to produce robust qualifications that allow a candidate to enter vocational education, and centres to provide a solid grounding to candidates.

3.1 Principal aims of the Group Award

♦ To develop candidates' range of contemporary vocational skills relating to internet use including making safe and legal use of the internet; using social software for interaction and collaboration; finding, reviewing and creating weblogs.
♦ To provide candidates with opportunities to develop Core Skills in Information and Communication Technology.
♦ To prepare candidates with opportunities to develop transferable skills in technology
♦ To prepare candidates for progression to further studies in interactive media, computing or related disciplines.
♦ To prepare candidates for employment in an IT/computing-related post at junior technician level.

3.2 General aims of the Group Award

Other aims of the award are to provide the opportunity for:

♦ Candidates to progress within the SCQF in National Certificate Digital Media Computing, to another National Certificate or another NPA
♦ Candidates to develop employment skills which are directly related to the relevant National Occupational Standards
♦ Enhancement of the portfolio of qualifications available to candidates and centres
♦ Centres to have flexibility of qualification delivery

3.3   Target groups

The rationale for developing the National Progression Award in Social Software at SCQF level 4 is to address shortcomings in the current SQA provision at SCQF level 4 and to provide centres with a progressive set of awards. The age range of candidates is from young secondary education and adult learners, in the community and FE. The practical nature of the component Units and their relevance to modern technology usage will help centres engage and motivate the 'difficult to teach' client groups that are often encountered at SCQF level 4.

The provision of awards at SCQF level 4 and Units at SCQF levels 4 and 5 meets the requirements of candidates for an entry-level that matches their ability and for progression at an appropriate pace to further levels of study. This award is a subset of the National Certificate in Digital Media Computing suite of awards (reference should be made to the Arrangements Documents for each level of award). Overall, this award should be well suited to the following candidate groups: young persons entering after leaving school (often with low-attainment); mature adults returning to full-time study or preparing for a career change; mature adults who have previous experience of short IT courses and wish to extend their interest.

There is nothing in the awards structure or content that would provide artificial barriers to candidates with disabilities.

The majority of candidates undertaking this award is looking to improve skills in using the internet more safely and efficiently. This award could be used as a stepping stone for progression and articulation to the next level.

Many centres will use this award to address the needs of the 16–18 year olds that fall into the category of Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). This cohort is targeted by the Government's Get Ready for Work Programme, a work-based training programme.

The Units in this NPA are highly relevant to the experiences and outcomes of the Curriculum for Excellence, with some specific links as noted below:

Reference	Outcome	Topic Area(s)	Coverage
TCH 211F / TCH 314F / ICT	Acting safely and responsibly, I can select and make effective use of a range of different technologies to communicate and collaborate.	Safety Communication and Collaboration	Internet Safety Digital Culture
TCH 315F / ICT	I can recognise security risks when handling electronic information and can consider the different ways to protect technological devices from outside interference.	Safety	Internet Safety
TCH 416F / Comp	I can work with others to plan and use a learning group for sharing experiences, ideas and information within a secure online environment.	Communication and Collaboration	Digital Culture
TCH 417F / Comp	I can compare different forms of security software to gain knowledge and understanding of their functions in protecting contemporary technologies.	Safety	Internet Safety
TCH 426K / Bus Ed	Whilst working in a simulated or real workplace, I can examine my work environment considering office layout, ergonomics factors, and health and safety legislation.	Safety	Internet Safety
TCH 427K / Bus Ed and Comp	By discussing the business, environmental, ethical and social implications of computer technology, I can begin to gain an understanding of the need for sustainability and accessibility.	Social Implications	Digital Culture

3.4   Employment opportunities

It is envisaged that those candidates who progress directly into employment on completion of this award may be able to gain entry-level positions such as Computer Technician, Help Desk Technician or Web Development Assistant.

3.5   Core skills, citizenship and employability

There are no core skills embedded or signposted within this award, however, the individual Units do signpost core skills and these are detailed in the respective Unit specifications.

The topics used for the practical nature of the Units can allow for any areas of citizenship to be addressed, whether to provide information, to produce something that can be used by the wider community or to work with other people.

Units in the award emphasise the importance of developing generic skills which will help candidates to succeed in their chosen studies, careers and future lives. There will also be ample opportunities during the delivery of the award for the lecturer to make explicit issues such as the candidate's personal responsibility for completing a task or contributing to a group effort, for planning and making arrangements for her/his own work and for reflecting and commenting on the effectiveness of their work and that of others.

4   Access to Group Award(s)

Access to this Award will be at the discretion of the centre, however, the following provides guidance on what is considered to be knowledge and/or experience considered appropriate for entry to the award:

It would be beneficial if candidates had the following competence:

- Information technology skills at SCQF level 4 or equivalent, eg D01D 10 *Information Technology*

Mature candidates without formal qualifications but with appropriate industrial experience may also be considered.

5   Group Award(s) structure

5.1   Framework

All Units are mandatory within the framework of the NPA Social Software at SCQF level 4. The framework for the award is as follows:

Unit title	Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit value
Digital Culture: Social Software	F81P 10	6	4	1
*Internet Safety	H1F6 10	6	4	1
*Web Logs	H60D 45	6	5	1

*Refer to history of changes for revision details

Satisfactory achievement of all the mandatory Units will enable candidates to gain the National Progression Award in Social Software at SCQF level 4.

5.2 Mapping information

Links to National Occupational Standards

The Units have been written so as to be fully compatible with the relevant National Occupational Standards for IT Users. This will facilitate progression of candidates onto SVQs. It also gives the NPA credibility with employers.

Digital Culture: Social Software

Outcome 1 looks at describing the various types of social software available. The performance criteria cover describing the origins and characteristics of social software, identifying the main types of social software and their applications and selecting appropriate social software tools for use in specific circumstances. This outcome maps closely to the following NOS standards:

♦ **UCT:A2** Set up and access IT tools and devices for collaborative working

Outcome 2 looks at the impact of digital technologies on contemporary culture. The performance criteria cover identifying areas of digital technologies that have an impact on contemporary culture, describing the aspects of contemporary culture affected by digital technology and relating personal experience of digital culture.

Outcome 3 looks at using social software to perform specific tasks. The performance criteria cover using social software tools safely, efficiently and effectively, keeping content up-to-date and relevant to its purpose and target users and ensuring that social software supports effective communication and collaboration. This outcome maps closely to the following NOS standards:

♦ **UCT:A4** Contribute to tasks using collaborative technologies

♦ **UCT:B2** Plan and set up IT tools and devices for collaborative working

Internet Safety

Outcome 1 looks at identifying threats that can exist when using the internet. The performance criteria cover threats to system performance and system integrity, threats to data security and threats to user safety. This outcome maps closely to the following NOS standards:

♦ **INT:A5** Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices when working online

Outcome 2 looks at safety precautions which should be taken when using the internet. The performance criteria cover precautions for maintaining system performance and system integrity, precautions for maintaining data security, and precautions for maintaining user safety. This outcome maps closely to the following NOS standards:

♦ **INT:A5** Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices when working online

Outcome 3 looks at legal constraints which apply when using the internet. The performance criteria include constraints on the downloading of software and data, constraints on the use of online content, constraints on construction of websites and constraints on online behaviour. This outcome maps closely to the following NOS standards:

♦ **INT:B5** Understand the need for safety and security practices when working online

Outcome 4 looks at taking appropriate safety precautions and operating within relevant legal constraints when using the internet. The performance criteria cover maintaining system performance and system integrity, maintaining data security, maintaining user safety and observing copyright. This outcome maps closely to the following NOS standards:

♦ **UCT:A1** Stay safe and secure when using collaborative technology

Web Logs

Outcome 1 is about locating and reviewing blogs of various types. Outcome 3 is about tracking selected blogs. These outcomes map closely to the following NOS standards:

♦ **ICF:B2** Access, search for, select and use internet-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose

♦ **INT:C3** Use browser tools to search effectively and efficiently for information from the internet

Outcome 2 is about creating a blog to perform a specific information task. This outcome maps closely to the following NOS standards:

♦ **WS:C1** Create structures and styles and use them to produce websites

♦ **WS:C2** Select and use website software tools and features to develop multiple page websites with multimedia and interactive features

5.3 Articulation, professional recognition and credit transfer

Candidates who undertake this award could expect:

♦ Increased employment opportunities in the IT or interactive media sector if they enter employment directly from school. This could lead on to the candidate undertaking SVQs or a Modern Apprenticeship in IT.

♦ Progression to higher level IT or Interactive Media qualifications at college or university. At present colleges offer HNCs and HNDs in Information Technology and Interactive Media. Several universities offer undergraduate and postgraduate courses for which this qualification would provide a good basis.

NPA Social Software Level 4 - Progression Routes
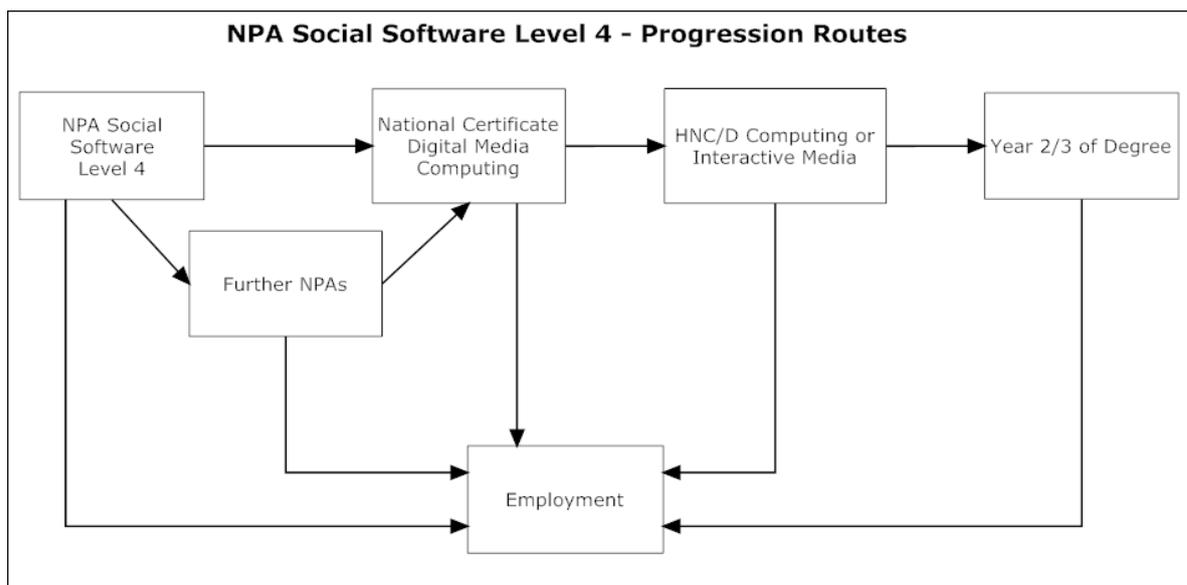
Progression pathways within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework:

SCQF level	SQA National Units, Courses and Group Awards	Higher Education	Scottish Vocational Qualifications	SCQF level
12		Doctorates		12
11		Masters IT or Interactive Media	SVQ 5 IT User	11
10		Honours Degree		10
9		Ordinary Degree		9
8		Higher National Diploma IT or Interactive Media	SVQ 4 IT User	8
7	Advanced Higher	Higher National Certificate IT or Interactive Media		7
6	**National Certificate in Digital Media Computing**		SVQ 3 IT User	**6**
5	National Progression Award in Social Software		SVQ 2 IT User	**5**
4	Intermediate 1		SVQ 1 IT User	4
3	Access 3			3
2	Access 2			2
1	Access 1			1

*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.

6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

6.1 Delivery

The NPA Social Software award has been created to match the requirements of candidates in the competences required in using the internet, particularly social software, in a safe and secure manner whether at home or in a formal educational setting. The award has been designed to meet this demand by providing an opportunity to group together Units to give a coherent theme towards using the internet which will:

♦ provide a candidate with the confidence to access and use the internet safely
♦ ensure that the tools of the internet are identified, introduced, accessed and used properly
♦ provide a candidate with additional internet skills by this short course of study which will equip them to articulate to further studies
♦ develop a candidate's use of the internet as an information tool for study and research

The award could be delivered:

♦ on an interest basis only
♦ as a standalone course offering progression to another NPA or formal course
♦ as a standalone course offering progression to the National Certificate Digital Media Computing or another National Certificate

An integrated approach to assessment is recommended for the NPA Social Software awards. The individual Units that comprise the NPA can have assessment of Outcomes integrated and the practical assessments across the Units may be combined.

The NPA Social Software award lends itself to either full-time or part-time study. It is envisaged that there will be a number of centres that will adopt an open-learning mode of delivery. However, there are no obvious barriers or recommendations to delivering the award in either a full-time or open-learning mode of delivery.

The recommended sequencing of the Units of the NPA Social Software award at this level is as follows:

1   Internet Safety
2   Digital Culture: Social Software
3   Web Logs

There are opportunities to integrate items within these Units, however, no recommendation is offered here.

6.2 Assessment

Assessment for each of the Units is sequential from Outcome 2 onwards — practical assessments. The assessment for Outcome 1 should be offered towards the end of the Unit, once candidates have gained the knowledge and understanding through the practical aspects of the Units.

7   General information for centres

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements**.

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

The National Progression Award in Social Software at SCQF level 4 will introduce candidates to the fundamental knowledge and skills required in using the internet and social software for business or personal purposes. The Units that comprise this National Progression Award are a subset of the Units in the National Certificate in Digital Media Computing suite of awards at SCQF level 4.

This National Progression Award is capable of being delivered in a wide range of delivery modes. It is well suited to delivery as an intensive short-course programme, making full use of the inter-relationship between the Units. This award can also be delivered on a full-time, part-time or flexible mode at a centre's discretion.

The delivery of the component units will be largely through practical activities, supported by lecturer demonstration and exposition. Basic information and theory will be covered in lectures, but candidates will also develop independence in their learning through exercises which will require information to be acquired from the internet and assessed for suitability and relevance.

With the increasing availability of e-learning materials, it is highly likely that some of the delivery of these awards will be presented in an online format.

The assessment for these Units is largely composed of practical assignments and the evidence for achievement will be a logbook maintained by the candidate along with stored and printed elements of their work with corresponding candidate checklist(s) completed by the assessor (where necessary). The candidate's knowledge and understanding will be tested by written and/or oral recorded evidence.

The testing of knowledge and understanding may be carried out through computer-based assessment (e-assessment) which will provide candidates with 'on-demand' testing and immediate return of their results.

A successful candidate will have gained the knowledge and skills suitable to complement the study of other National Progression awards similar to this award or to progress to a selection of different National Certificates awards, particularly the Digital Media Computing suite, or Higher National Diploma awards.

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 SCQF credit point equates to 10 hours of learning. NQ Units at SCQF levels 2–6 are worth 6 SCQF credit points, NQ Units at level 7 are worth 8 SCQF points.

SCQF levels: The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2-6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Dedicated Unit to cover Core Skills: This is a non-subject Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills.

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 National Certificate/National Progression Award 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 National Certificates/National Progression Awards are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.