

Autumn 2012

To: SQA Co-ordinator
LEA
Directors of Education
Customer Accounts Managers
All Centres

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

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications Update — Computing, Computing Studies, Information Systems and SfW Creative Digital Media

The contents of this update, which provides information and advice to centres in relation to National Qualifications in Computing, Computing Studies, Information Systems and SfW Creative Digital Media Courses at all levels, should be passed to the members of staff responsible for these subjects.

SQA Appointees

We would like to express our gratitude and extend our thanks to all those who have undertaken duties in session 2011-12. We appreciate the work that all the teams carry out and look forward to session 2012-13.

Marking and Verification are extremely important and highly valued components of the education system in Scotland. Many teachers carry out these roles as part of their Continuous Professional Development or to further their own understanding of the assessment process. If you are interested in becoming a Marker or Verifier for next year's diet of examinations and have at least three years experience of teaching in the relevant subject and level, please complete an appointee application form, which can be downloaded from the Appointee Management page of SQA's website www.sqa.org.uk/am, and return it to am@sqa.org.uk.

Final Presentations - Standard Grade

As you will be aware, our Standard Grade Courses are ending and the final examinations will be in May/June 2013 - this means that your final groups of candidates on these two-year Courses will have started in August 2011. No candidate should begin a Standard Grade Course in session 2012-13.

External and Internal Assessment Reports

These reports are now available from the SQA website (www.sqa.org.uk). It is essential that you take time to read through these reports as they contain pertinent feedback on diet 2011-12. The reports contain advice for centres about the areas in which candidates performed well and in which they found difficulties. One point that was referred to in many of the External Assessment Reports was the examination technique of the candidates – the reports make specific reference to this but a common point was that candidates were answering ‘Describe/ Explain’ questions with responses that were more appropriate for ‘State’ questions and, as such, were not attracting marks.

e-NABs (Computing and Computing Studies)

As advised in previous Update Letters, there is now a full range of electronic National Assessment Bank materials available for the Units of the Computing Studies (Intermediate 1), Computing (Intermediate 2) and Computing (Higher). These assessments are being delivered through SQA’s e-assessment system – SOLAR (www.solar.org.uk) and if you would like your candidates to benefit from these e-NABs, please contact the e-assessment team on solar@sqa.org.uk.

Verification

It is a condition of approval to offer SQA qualifications that robust internal verification procedures are in place, implemented and documented at your centre. Please ensure that these procedures are adhered to. Further information on internal verification can be found on the SQA website: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46174.html>

Creative Digital Media (SfW)

Unit & NAB Revision

Following feedback from deliverers and discussion with our team of verifiers we have undertaken a minor review of the Course and its constituent Units.

- F5CV 10 Creative Digital Media: An Introduction to the Industry – we now have a replacement Unit that is more accessible; H2M6 10 Creative Digital Media: An Introduction to the Industry. Either Unit can be used in the current session, however we recommend switching to the replacement Unit in session 2013-14.
- F5CW 10 Creative Digital Media: The Creative Process and F5CX 10 Creative Digital Media: Hardware and Software – these Units remain unchanged.
- F5CY 10 Creative Digital Media: Production Project – this Unit has been revised and is more accessible but the Unit code remains unchanged. You can use the original Unit specification or the revised one in the current session, however we recommend switching to the replacement in session 2013-14.

The updated Course Arrangements document can be found at:
http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files/nq/Creative_Digital_Media_Int1.pdf

For both the replacement Unit and the revised Unit we have new Unit assessment materials and these are available from the secure area of our website.

Progression

The Skills for Work Course – Creative Digital Media is only available at Intermediate 1 (SCQF level 4) and whilst many progression opportunities already exist there is another that you may not be aware of. At Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5) there is a Skills for Work Course which may prove to be a worthwhile progression route for some candidates.

Creative Industries (C276 11) has a similar structure to Creative Digital Media and can be delivered in a similar context. Full details can be found on the SQA website:
<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45508.html>

Coursework Tasks (Computing, Computing Studies and Information Systems).

Standard Grade Coursework Tasks and Projects

The Tasks and Projects remain unchanged and are currently available from the secure area of the SQA website.

National Qualifications Coursework Tasks (Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher)

Coursework Tasks for candidates who will be sitting their examination in May/June 2013 are now available from the secure area of our website. These are the **only** Coursework Tasks that can be used with candidates who will be undertaking our Question Papers in May/ June 2013.

However we have now published the Coursework Tasks from previous years (for practice/ revision/ learning & teaching purposes) alongside the past Question Papers and these can be found at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/pastpapers/findpastpaper.htm>.

It should be noted that the Coursework Task forms part of the Course assessment along with the Question Paper. Candidates must, therefore attempt the correct level of Coursework Task in relation to the Question Paper which they will later sit, ie. the mark for a Higher Coursework Task cannot be combined with the mark for an Intermediate 2 Question Paper to get a Course award. Candidates will also perform better if they are set a task which is suited to their abilities.

Another point to note is that, when marking the Coursework Tasks of your candidates, we would expect to see a broad range of marks as each candidate will perform differently – further information relating to this is included with each of the Coursework Tasks.

Digital Question Papers

As you will be aware, your centre can request additional support for candidates with an additional assessment need (for example the provision of a scribe to assist writing). With these requests, there are often instances where candidates wish to type their responses

because of their additional assessment need, however you may not be aware that we are also able to provide the Standard Grade and Intermediate 1 Computing Studies Question Papers in a digital format – a PDF file of the actual Question Paper where candidates can type their responses directly into the spaces for the answers (this is then printed, it cannot be saved, by yourselves and submitted with the Question Papers of the other candidates). If this is something that you think may be more appropriate for candidates in this position than typing responses onto a blank word processor document, then please feel free to ask for it as part of the normal process for additional assessment/support requests. Further information (including a list of all subjects/levels where these are available and also examples of past digital papers) can be found at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/30030.html>.

Curriculum for Excellence

Work is ongoing in the development of the new Curriculum for Excellence qualifications and the Curriculum Area Review Group (CARG) and the Qualification Design Teams (QDTs) have met several times. All information, including documentation in draft form, will be published on our website at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/42545.html>.

Should you require any further information regarding the content of this letter or any other matter relating to SG/ NQ Computing, Computing Studies, Information Studies and Skills for Work - Creative Digital Media Courses, please contact us using the details provided below.

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Yours faithfully



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Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths