



National 4
Course
Specification



National 4 Administration and IT Course Specification (C701 74)

Valid from August 2013

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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Course outline

Course title: National 4 Administration and IT

SCQF: level 4 (24 SCQF credit points)

Course code: C701 74

Mandatory Units

H1YV 74	Administrative Practices (National 4)	6 SCQF credit points
H1YW 74	IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4)	6 SCQF credit points
H1YY 74	Communication in Administration (National 4)	6 SCQF credit points

Added Value Unit

H201 74 Administration and IT Assignment (National 4) 6 SCQF credit points

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for the assessment of added value in the Added Value Unit. Further information on this Unit is provided in the Assessment section.

Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following or by equivalent qualifications or experience:

- ◆ Administration and IT (National 3 or relevant component Units)
 - ◆ Business (National 3 or relevant component Units)

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for doing this Course. Further information on relevant experiences and outcomes is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Core Skills

Achievement of this Course gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill Information and Communication Technology at SCQF level 4

Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ other qualifications in Administration and IT or related areas
 - ◆ further study, employment or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

Equality and inclusion

This Course Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

Rationale

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate and fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles

The National 4 Administration and IT Course builds on the principles and practice paper and the relevant experiences and outcomes for the technologies curriculum area. It enables learners to understand the nature of administration and to embrace and use IT in administration-related contexts. The Course lays foundations for lifelong learning and a successful working life.

The Course develops successful learners who achieve through participating in engaging, motivating and relevant learning experiences in real-life administration contexts; and confident individuals who derive satisfaction from engaging in practical activities relevant to the world of work and from having their achievements and skills recognised.

Learners following this Course become responsible citizens who actively participate in the work of the class, become aware of issues affecting society, such as internet safety and the impacts of IT, and take on organisational tasks; and effective contributors who share their views with others, effectively contributing to group tasks and supporting their peers whenever appropriate.

The Course develops a range of skills for learning, life and work, which have a universal application and are essential to individuals' effective functioning in all three areas. They include IT and aspects of literacy, numeracy and thinking skills.

Purpose and aims of the Course

Administration is a growing sector which cuts across the entire economy and offers wide-ranging employment opportunities. Moreover, administrative and IT skills have extensive application not only in employment but also in other walks of life.

The key purpose of this Course is to develop learners' administrative and IT skills and, ultimately, to enable them to contribute to the effective functioning of organisations. The Course aims to enable learners to:

- ◆ develop a basic understanding of administration in the workplace and key legislation affecting employees
- ◆ develop an appreciation of good customer care
- ◆ develop IT skills and use them to perform straightforward administrative tasks
- ◆ acquire organisational skills in the context of organising and supporting small-scale events

The broad structure of the Course meets its purpose and aims, which are addressed by the Units it comprises.

The Course contains a significant practical component, which involves experiential learning, encouraging the integration of skills, knowledge and understanding through practical activities. Its use of real-life contexts makes it relevant to the world of work, and its uniqueness lies in developing IT skills in an administration-related context. While the skills, knowledge and understanding it develops reflect current administrative practice, the Course is sufficiently flexible to take account of emerging technologies, and this will ensure its continuing currency and relevance.

The Course makes an important contribution to general education through developing a range of essential skills which will stand learners in good stead regardless of the career path they ultimately choose. Its contribution to vocational education is just as significant, as it opens up progression to a range of careers in administration and IT. The Course also supports the wider curriculum through its emphasis on IT.

Information about typical learners who might do the Course

This Course is designed for those who are interested in administration and practical uses of IT and want to develop their administrative and IT skills further. Learners who have completed the Course will be able to utilise the acquired administration- and IT-related knowledge, understanding and skills at home, in the wider community and, ultimately, in employment.

The Course takes into account the needs of all learners in that it recognises that young people achieve in different ways and at different paces.

Learners will develop a range of both generic and subject-specific skills, including the ability to use the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets, databases, presentations and desktop publishing; and the ability to use technology, including the internet, for electronic communication and investigation.

Learners will also develop the skills, qualities and attributes to organise and support small-scale events.

The Course will support learners' personal and social development and will serve them very well in their day-to-day lives, as well as preparing them for the next stage in their education and for entering the world of work. Whatever path they choose, those who have completed this Course will thus be able to play their part in the economic and social life of the 21st century effectively.

The Course opens up a range of progression routes — both vertical and lateral — to further education, including other National Qualifications, Skills for Work, National Progression Awards and National Certificates. It may also lead to employment and/or training in various industries.

Course structure and conditions of award

Course structure

The Course, which is practical and experiential in nature, develops both generic and subject-specific skills in administration-related contexts. The generic skills include the skills of remembering, understanding and applying as well as aspects of literacy and numeracy. The subject-specific skills, which include basic IT skills, will enable learners to organise, process and communicate information, to carry out straightforward administrative tasks and to organise and support small-scale events.

This Course comprises four mandatory Units, including the Added Value Unit. All Units form a coherent whole, with learners' skills and related knowledge and understanding being systematically developed throughout the Course.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a variety of ways.

Administrative Practices (National 4)

The purpose of this Unit is to give learners a basic introduction to administration in the workplace. Learners will begin to appreciate key legislation affecting employees, key features of good customer care and the skills, qualities and attributes required of administrators. The Unit will also enable them to apply this basic understanding in carrying out a range of straightforward administrative tasks required for organising and supporting small-scale events.

IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4)

The purpose of this Unit is to develop learners' basic skills in IT and organising and processing simple information in familiar administration-related contexts. Learners will use the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets and databases, to create and edit simple business documents. The Unit will allow emerging technologies to be incorporated so as to ensure that its content remains current and relevant.

Communication in Administration (National 4)

The purpose of this Unit is to enable learners to use IT for gathering and sharing simple information with others in familiar administration-related contexts. Learners will develop a basic understanding of what constitutes a reliable source of information and an ability to use appropriate methods for gathering information. They will also become able to communicate simple information in ways which show a basic awareness of its context, audience and purpose. The Unit will allow emerging technologies to be incorporated so as to ensure that its content remains current and relevant.

Added Value Unit: Administration and IT Assignment (National 4)

The purpose of this Unit is to draw on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in the other three Units. Learners will undertake practical administration- and IT-based tasks to organise and support a small-scale event or events.

Conditions of award

To achieve the National 4 Administration and IT Course, learners must pass all of the required Units, including the Added Value Unit. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section.

National 4 Courses are not graded.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Full skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course are given in the *Added Value Unit Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be covered in the Course is given in this section.

This includes:

- ◆ skills, qualities and attributes required of administrators
- ◆ basic skills in using the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets, databases, presentations and desktop publishing, in familiar administrative contexts
- ◆ skills in organising and supporting small-scale events
- ◆ basic skills in using technology, including the internet, for electronic communication and investigation in familiar administrative contexts
- ◆ basic skills in organising, processing and communicating simple information in familiar administrative contexts
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of key legislation affecting employees in the workplace
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the key features of good customer care

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level (www.sqa.org.uk/scqf).

Assessment

Further information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Support Notes* and the *Added Value Unit Specification*.

Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*.

They can be assessed on an individual Unit basis or by using other approaches which combine the assessment for more than one Unit.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows:

Administrative Practices (National 4)

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

skills in carrying out straightforward administrative tasks to organise and support small-scale events

basic knowledge of key legislation affecting employees, the key features of good customer care and skills, qualities and attributes required of administrators

IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4)

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

- ◆ basic skills in using the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets and databases, in familiar administrative contexts
- ◆ basic skills in organising and processing simple information in familiar administrative contexts

Communication in Administration (National 4)

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

- ◆ basic skills in using IT for gathering simple information from the internet and intranet
- ◆ basic skills in preparing simple information using multimedia and desktop publishing
- ◆ basic skills in communicating information

Added Value Unit

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of added value¹. At National 4, added value will be assessed in an Added Value Unit. The Added Value Unit will address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge and application.

In this Course, the Added Value Unit will focus on challenge and application.

The learner will be assessed by a practical administration- and IT-based assignment² drawing on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed across the Course. This will require learners to extend administration-related knowledge, understanding and skills, and to apply them in the context of organising and supporting a small-scale event.

¹ Definitions can be found here: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html>

² Definitions can be found here: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html>

Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

2 Numeracy

- 2.3 Information handling

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

- 4.1 Employability
- 4.2 Information and communication technology (ICT)

5 Thinking skills

- 5.1 Remembering
- 5.2 Understanding
- 5.3 Applying

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Employability, enterprise and citizenship skills shown in this National Course provide automatic certification of Core Skill: Information and Communication Technology at SCQF level 4.

Administrative information

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History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	Core Skills information added.	Qualifications Development Manager	June 2013

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