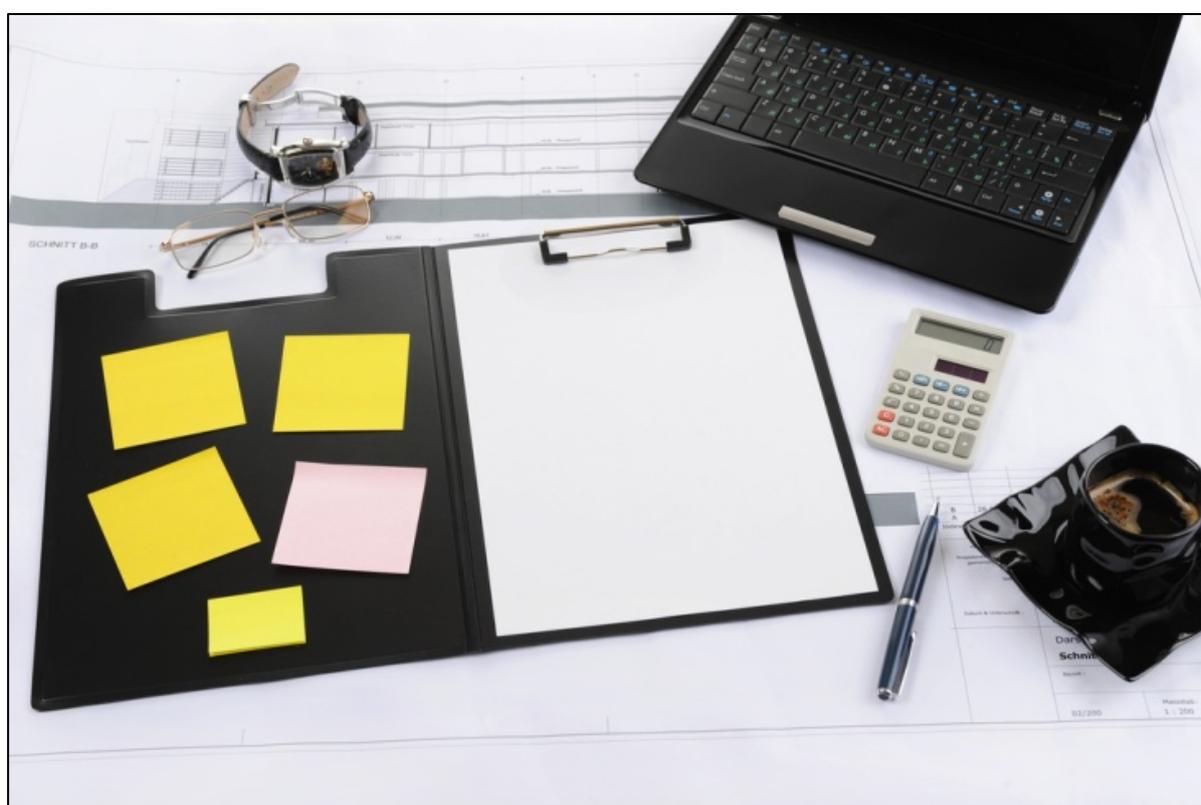


Higher Administration and IT Course Support Notes



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

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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Higher Administration and IT Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units. They should be read in conjunction with the *Course Specification*, the *Course Assessment Specification* and the Unit Specifications for the Units in the Course.

General guidance on the Course

Aims

The Course aims to develop learners' administrative and IT skills and to enable learners to:

- ◆ develop knowledge and understanding of administration in the workplace and its importance
- ◆ develop a range of advanced IT skills for processing and managing information
- ◆ develop a range of skills to communicate complex information effectively, making appropriate use of IT
- ◆ acquire skills in managing the organisation of events

Progression into this Course

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

- ◆ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 5) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 5) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Course

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the Course.

Note: teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification* for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course.

The Course contains a practical component underpinned by related knowledge and understanding. Its key purpose is to develop learners' administrative and IT skills.

In each reference to desktop publishing, documents could also be produced using a word processing application. Desktop publishing merely refers to the layout of a publication, other than a standard business document, such as an invitation.

Most administrative tasks are based on supporting events, which can vary from a meeting between two or more people to much larger scenarios, and this will be made more meaningful for learners if they are given opportunities to practise organising and supporting real events. Centres should note that this is not a requirement of the Course, but that carrying out tasks that simulate a real-life approach will prepare learners for Unit and Course assessment.

Accuracy and time management are key aspects of an administrator's work, and learners should be encouraged to develop these skills throughout the Course.

The skills, knowledge and understanding that will be developed in the Higher Administration Course are outlined in the following table.

Mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding	Administrative Theory and Practice	IT Solutions for Administrators	Communication in Administration
Using a range of complex functions of the following IT applications — word processing, spreadsheets, databases, desktop publishing and presentation software — in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts		✓	✓
Using technology, including the internet, for electronic communication in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts			✓
Organising, managing and communicating relatively complex information to a range of audiences		✓	✓
Managing the organisation of events	✓	✓	✓
Procedures for organising and supporting a range of meetings/events	✓	✓	✓
Solving problems in an administrative-related context	✓	✓	✓
Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of administration in the workplace and its importance	✓		
Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of key legislation affecting administration and its implications for organisations	✓	✓	✓
Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the impact of IT on the working practices	✓		
Applying knowledge and understanding of effective teams and time and task management	✓		
Applying knowledge and understanding of the features of good customer care and the benefits of good, and consequences of poor, customer care	✓		✓

Progression from this Course

This Course or its components may provide progression to:

- ◆ other qualifications in Administration and IT or related areas at SCQF level 7
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Hierarchies

Hierarchy is the term used to describe Courses and Units which form a structured sequence involving two or more SCQF levels.

In Administration and IT the Courses and Units are offered from SCQF level 3 to SCQF level 6.

It is important that any content in a Course and/or Unit at one particular SCQF level is not repeated if a learner progresses to the next level of the hierarchy. The skills and knowledge should be able to be applied to new content and contexts to enrich the learning experience. This is for centres to manage.

This may be achieved through the planned use of appropriately differentiated activities and contexts within Units. The level of learner support would also be a useful factor in ensuring progression rather than repetition.

Learners will be expected to demonstrate a greater degree of autonomy with less support offered by the teacher/lecturer the higher they progress through the hierarchy. This should increase the sense of ownership the learners have over their work and ensure that, even if they have previously completed the Course at a lower level, their interest in the subject is kept alive.

To the learners who might exceed the SCQF level they are working at, a hierarchical arrangement gives the opportunity to have their best achievements recognised. For those who might fall short in some areas, on the other hand, it provides fallback. A hierarchical arrangement also enables learners to work at different levels in one class, and it is envisaged that this will happen in some centres.

Approaches to learning and teaching

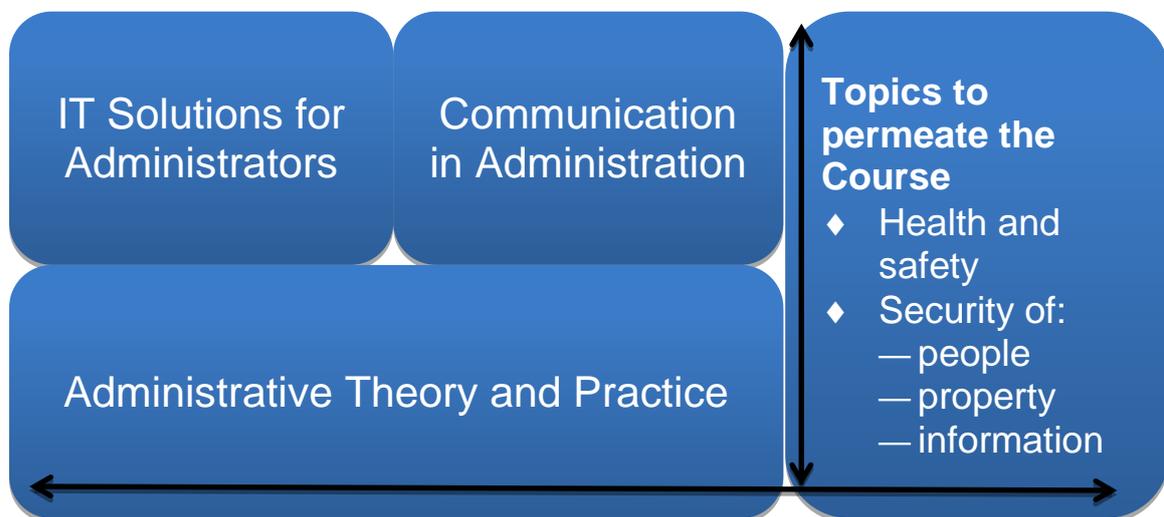
Learning and teaching approaches should be learner-centred, participative and practical in nature. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning. The underpinning knowledge should be combined with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities.

In general, teaching strategies should allow learners to:

- ◆ work co-operatively and assume shared responsibility
- ◆ operate within an administrative context
- ◆ prioritise tasks and work within deadlines
- ◆ acquire, extend and apply administration- and IT-related skills, knowledge and understanding
- ◆ create and present business documents to an appropriate and professional standard
- ◆ be involved in self and peer assessment

Centres are free to sequence the teaching of the Outcomes, Units and/or Course in any order they wish. For example, Units may be taught in sequence or be fully combined. A combined approach is recommended, as it will enable learners to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in a meaningful way. Such an approach also helps learners to transfer any newly developed skills to new contexts.

Combined approach to delivery



To make the Course engaging, teachers/lecturers could also use, and encourage learners to use, a wide variety of multimedia (such as the internet, video clips, photographs). Use could also be made of contacts with industry partners and visits to local businesses.

ICT can be a very useful tool in supporting learning and teaching and should be used in innovative and creative ways. Teachers/lecturers could, for example, encourage web-based research and get learners to present their research findings in a blog.

Teachers/lecturers should appreciate that use of IT and other electronic means of communication is constantly changing, which is why it is important to keep abreast of new developments, and up-to-date with evolving practices.

Learning about Scotland and Scottish culture will enrich the learners' learning experience and help them to develop the skills for learning, life and work they will need to prepare them for taking their place in a diverse, inclusive and participative Scotland and beyond. Where there are opportunities to contextualise approaches to learning and teaching to Scottish contexts, teachers and lecturers should consider this.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

The generic skills for learning, life and work which this Course develops include aspects of numeracy, employability and thinking skills. It will be important for teachers/lecturers to offer learners ample opportunity to develop these skills as an integral part of their learning experience because this will highlight those skills' relevance.

The coverage of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is illustrated in the tables below.

Skill	How it is developed
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ listening to and following instructions ◆ making presentations ◆ participating in group discussions ◆ asking and answering questions ◆ interviewing administration personnel in the centre ◆ listening to guest speakers ◆ carrying out mystery shopping ◆ listening to audio-based material ◆ listening to and following instructions
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ extracting information from graphical formats in a variety of media ◆ interpreting and understanding written information and data in tables, charts, graphs and written information ◆ understanding and interpreting information and data from the internet and intranet
Employability, enterprise and citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ researching duties, skills and qualities of administrators ◆ working with others ◆ being punctual and managing time ◆ showing flexibility, resilience, initiative and responsibility ◆ using a range of software packages for research and accurate presentation of information ◆ using a range of digital media ◆ using ICT responsibly and safely ◆ planning tasks ◆ finding and evaluating information from the internet and intranet

Thinking skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ memorising and recalling administration and IT-related facts ◆ understanding and explaining the factors contributing to the effectiveness of administrative practices within organisations ◆ understanding and explaining the features and benefits of good customer care and consequences of poor customer care ◆ understanding the functions of spreadsheets, databases and word processing software or emerging equivalent technologies ◆ applying knowledge of health, safety and security to different contexts ◆ applying administration and IT skills, knowledge and understanding to create, edit and update business documents ◆ understanding and explaining what constitutes a reliable source of information ◆ understanding and explaining the importance of the context, audience and purpose of communication
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Teachers/lecturers should make learners aware of the IT specific and the generic skills they are developing and of their transferability. These skills will aid further study and enhance learners' personal effectiveness and employability in a range of sectors.

Approaches to assessment

Assessors should create suitable assessments to appropriately evaluate the performance of a learner against each Outcome of all of the Units that they undertake in the Higher Administration and IT Course. To determine the most appropriate ways to generate this evidence, assessors will use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners.

Assessments must be fit for purpose and should allow for consistent judgements to be made by all assessors. They should also be conducted in a supervised manner to ensure that the evidence provided is valid and reliable.

Assessments must ensure that the evidence generated demonstrates, at least, the minimum level of competence for each Unit. Assessors preparing assessment methods should be clear about what that evidence will look like for their centre or learners. Examples of suitable forms of evidence could include:

- ◆ answers to multiple choice questions
- ◆ short written responses
- ◆ participation in group working (making use of log books and question and answer sessions to ensure individual learners have met all the Assessment Standards)
- ◆ presenting information to other groups
- ◆ observation of learners performing tasks
- ◆ various forms of e-assessment, such as e-portfolios
- ◆ printouts of the work completed
- ◆ written responses to a question paper

The structure of the assessment used by a centre can vary. For example an assessment could:

- ◆ assess each individual Assessment Standard of an Outcome as it is delivered
- ◆ holistically assess one complete Outcome
- ◆ holistically assess all of the Outcomes of one (or more) Units

Teachers/lecturers should note that learners' day-to-day work may produce evidence which satisfies assessment requirements of a Unit, or Units, either in full or partially. Such naturally occurring evidence, which may include printed examples of 'best work' generated during lessons, may be used as a contribution towards Unit assessment.

Preparation for Course assessment

Each Course has an allocation of time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher/lecturer to enable learners to prepare for Course assessment. This time may be used throughout the Course for consolidation and support. It may also be used for preparation for Unit assessment or for further integration, revision and preparation and/or gathering evidence for Course assessment.

Information given in the *Course Specification* and the *Course Assessment Specification* about the assessment of added value is mandatory.

Examples of activities to include within this preparation time are described below.

- ◆ Preparing for the assignment — this time could be used by learners to extend and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in the context of a given scenario, which may relate to organising and supporting an event. A range of Administration and IT-related tasks could be practised and completed within the timescale required for the Course assessment.
- ◆ Preparing for the question paper — this may be done individually, in small groups or within the class as a whole, at the discretion of the teacher/lecturer, and could include the exemplification of command words to assist learners in developing their responses.

Combining assessment across Units

Centres are free to deliver and assess Units and Outcomes in any order they wish. This provides an opportunity for flexibility in sequencing the delivery of the Course and/or Units.

Where possible, using a combined approach to assessment is recommended because it will:

- ◆ enrich the assessment process for both learners and teachers/lecturers by bringing together elements of different Units
- ◆ make more sense to learners and avoid duplication of assessment
- ◆ ensure greater rigour in assessment
- ◆ allow for evidence for all Units to be drawn from a range of activities, making it easier to cover aspects which may not occur in a one-off assessment
- ◆ use assessment opportunities efficiently and reduce over-assessment

Combined assessment will also minimise repetition, allow more time for learning and enable centres to manage the assessment process more efficiently.

The Course offers many opportunities for combining assessment across Units, and teachers/lecturers should use them whenever appropriate. One example would be to get learners to prepare a presentation on customer care, which would integrate Outcomes from *Administrative Theory and Practice* and *Communication in Administration*.

When assessment across the Units is combined, teachers/lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each Unit to ensure that learners who do not achieve the entire Course may still get the credit for the Unit or Units they have achieved.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Course Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA's assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs, when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on Assessment Arrangements on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa//14977.html.
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work](#)
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment](#)
- ◆ [Course Specification](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) and [SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- ◆ [Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool](#)

Administrative information

Published: September 2015 (version 1.1)

History of changes to Course Support Notes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Minor change to the 'Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Course'.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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Unit Support Notes — Administrative Theory and Practice (Higher)



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

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Administrative Theory and Practice* (Higher) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the *Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Assessment Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to enable learners to develop an in-depth knowledge and understanding of administration in, and the impact of IT on, the workplace. Learners will acquire an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the factors contributing to the effectiveness of the administrative function, such as the strategies for effective time and task management and for complying with workplace legislation, what makes effective teams and procedures for organising and supporting a range of meetings/events. The theory in this Unit will also cover customer care.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ provide an account of the factors contributing to the effectiveness of administrative function
- ◆ provide an account of customer care in administration

Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit 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:

- ◆ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 5) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 5) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the Higher Administration and IT *Course Support Notes*.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit may provide progression to:

- ◆ other qualifications in Administration and IT or related areas at SCQF level 7
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

This Unit is predominantly theoretical and the underpinning knowledge should be combined with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning.

The table below suggests some activities which could support the delivery of this Unit and which may suit the needs of learners with different learning styles.

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Factors contributing to effectiveness of the administrative practices within organisations	<p>Time and task management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ skills required: planning, delegating, organising, directing and controlling ◆ setting targets for the individual and the organisation such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — personal development planning — action plans and to-do lists — Gantt charts ◆ dealing with changes in priorities ◆ monitoring and evaluating progress strategies used by both the employee and team leader ◆ time stealers and strategies to minimise their effect in independent and group working and meetings ◆ benefits of good time and task management — to the individual and organisation ◆ consequences of bad time and task management — to the individual and organisation 	<p>Time and task management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ learners interviewing a range of staff about their time and task management techniques — teachers/lecturers, centre managers, canteen managers, resource managers, etc ◆ teachers/lecturers giving learners a project (such as organising a school fundraiser, disco) and asking them to plan and organise it using time and task management tools ◆ teachers/lecturers giving learners feedback on their time and task management skills throughout the Course ◆ teachers/lecturers giving learners all homework tasks for the next two months and asking them to use action plans to ensure completion ◆ learners interviewing fellow learners about their study patterns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — What plans do they use? — What could distract them? — What strategies do they use to minimise distractions? ◆ learners designing a questionnaire and conducting a survey on what distracts employees from their tasks and presenting their findings in a report,

		<p>making use of charts and graphs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ learners delivering a presentation to a year group sitting exams on common time stealers and how to minimise these to stay on task ◆ learners completing a questionnaire which identifies the time stealers they are most susceptible to
	<p>Effective teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ features of effective teams ◆ team formation ◆ skills of team members — need for diversity ◆ benefits of teams to individuals and the organisation 	<p>Effective teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ teachers/lecturers using a questionnaire to identify each learner's most likely Belbin team role ◆ learners interviewing department/faculty heads on what they believe are the characteristics of good teams ◆ learners participating in team building games and challenges
	<p>Workplace regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ employee and employer responsibilities under current workplace legislation in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — health and safety — data handling 	<p>Workplace regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ health, safety and security: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — learners touring their centre or an outside business to identify health, safety and security measures — learners working in expert groups; each team being assigned a specific health and safety law and preparing a presentation on the responsibilities of both the employer and employee under this law. Each group then presents findings to the rest of the class — learners producing a leaflet or a presentation for employees highlighting the main points of different health and safety laws and how they affect different employees — learners researching real cases and consequences of non-compliance by employers or employees, looking at news

		<p>articles or the Health and Safety Executive's website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — learners researching measures their centre can take to ensure they and their employees/visitors abide by the health and safety laws. Learners can then evaluate the effectiveness of these measures — learners designing and displaying posters to remind staff of health and safety matters and responsibilities
	<p>Impact of IT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the positive and negative impact of IT on areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — office layout and ergonomics — employee morale and wellbeing — working practices (homeworking, teleworking, collaborative projects) — communication methods — data handling (software applications, networks, file management, eg naming conventions, version control, restricted access) 	<p>Impact of IT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ learners could interview centre staff/family to investigate the benefits and drawbacks of IT on different working practices and report their findings ◆ data handling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — using case studies to highlight good and bad organisational and employee practices and assessing their consequences — studying the centre's policies and procedures for ensuring the security of information and matching them to organisational responsibilities — following good file management techniques throughout the Course
	<p>Procedures for organising and supporting meetings/events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ role of Administrative Assistant and Chairperson in planning an event/meeting ◆ duties and tasks to be completed ◆ venue selection ◆ notifying attendees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ learners could role play meetings with one person taking notes and transcribing these ◆ wizards to create agenda ◆ research and selection of venues to suit different types of events ◆ keying-in minutes ◆ designing evaluation forms

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ documentation relating to meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — notice of meeting and agenda — minutes (including action minutes) ◆ evaluation forms ◆ use of technology to aid in the planning and organisation of events 	
Customer care	<p>The features of good customer care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ written customer care policy ◆ service level agreements ◆ complaints procedures <p>The benefits of good customer care.</p> <p>The consequences of poor customer care.</p> <p>Methods for monitoring and evaluating the quality of customer care such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ satisfaction surveys ◆ customer focus groups ◆ market research ◆ quality management systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ learners interviewing family members/friends about their customer care experiences, good or bad ◆ learners sharing their own good and bad experiences of customer care with the class ◆ teachers/lecturers inviting guest speakers (customer care managers, store managers, etc) to share their customer care policy and the benefits of looking after customers ◆ learners carrying out internet research looking at the customer care statements of well-known organisations ◆ learners making use of consumer affair programs to research customer service experiences ◆ mystery shopping — teachers/lecturers give pupils a list of quality checks and ask them to pretend to be a mystery shopper in an organisation of their choice and to present back to class ◆ learners evaluating the quality of the customer care given by the centre's canteen or reception services through questionnaires/observation etc ◆ learners visiting businesses or other agencies ◆ learners designing customer feedback tools, eg questionnaires, comment cards ◆ learners conducting role plays, acting out different scenarios based on different types of customers, and learning how to deal with them effectively ◆ learners responding to customers who have

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ complained (in a simulation) ◆ learners dealing with real enquiries to the centre by supporting the office or reception
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The table above gives examples of learning and teaching activities that may be used when delivering the Course. This would be classified as naturally occurring evidence which could be used to demonstrate that the learner has met the Assessment Standards within the Unit Specifications.

Combining assessment within Units

The assessment for this Unit will be theory-based. Although the Outcomes may be assessed either separately or holistically, combined assessment is recommended. However, it must be clear how the evidence covers each Outcome.

When assessment within the Unit is holistic, teachers/lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each individual Outcome to ensure that learners who do not achieve all Outcomes may still get the recognition for the Outcome or Outcomes they have achieved.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work](#)
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment](#)
- ◆ [Course Specification](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) and [SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- ◆ [Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool](#)
- ◆ [SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools](#)
- ◆ [SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education](#)
- ◆ [SQA e-assessment web page](#)

Administrative information

Published: September 2015 (version 1.1)

History of changes to Unit Support Notes

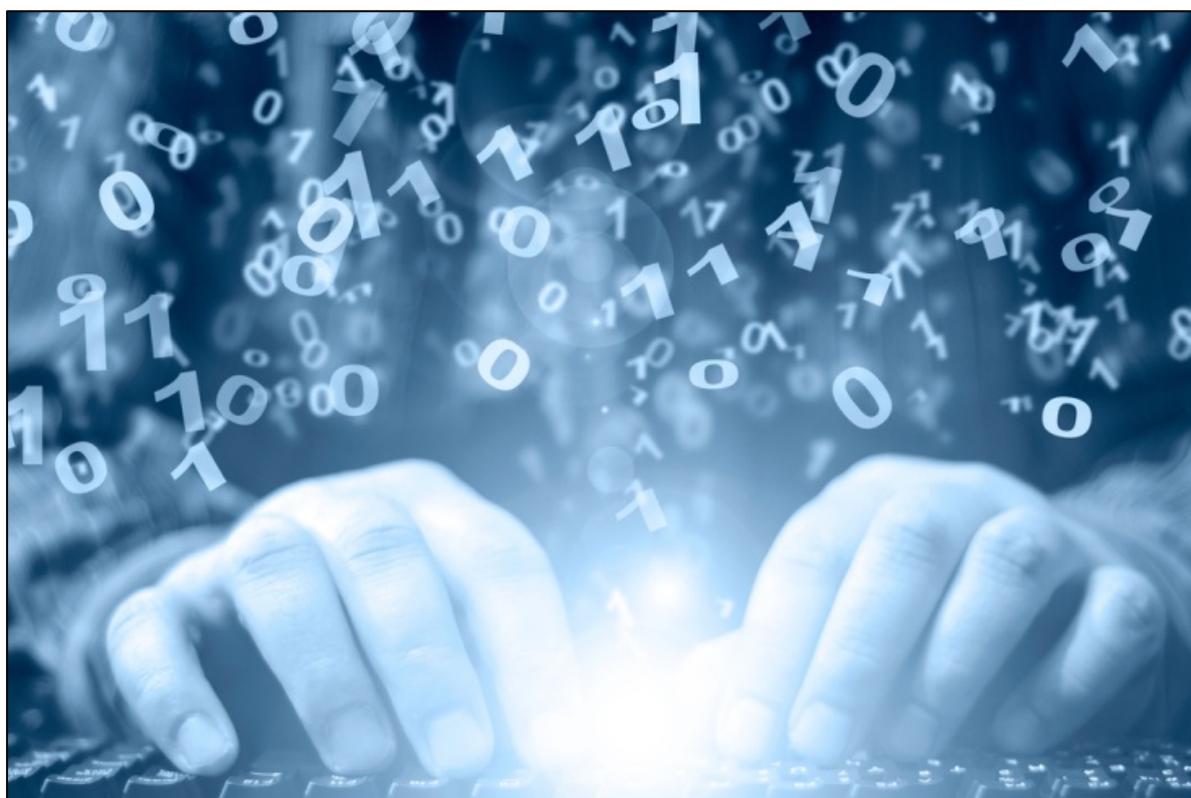
Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	'Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment' section amended to provide additional support.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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Unit Support Notes — IT Solutions for Administrators (Higher)



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

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *IT Solutions for Administrators* (Higher) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the *Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Assessment Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to develop learners' skills in IT, some of them complex, and in organising and managing information in administration-related contexts. The Unit will also enable learners to extend their problem solving skills through having to provide solutions asked for in a given brief. Learners will select appropriate IT applications covering word processing, spreadsheets and databases, or emerging equivalent technologies, and will use them to analyse, process and manage complex information in the context of creating and editing business documents.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ use complex functions of a spreadsheet to provide solutions asked for in a task
- ◆ use complex functions of a database to provide solutions asked for in a task
- ◆ use complex functions of word processing to provide solutions asked for in a task

Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit 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:

- ◆ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 5) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 5) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the Higher Administration and IT *Course Support Notes*.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit may provide progression to:

- ◆ other qualifications in Administration and IT or related areas at SCQF level 7
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

Learning and teaching approaches should be learner-centred, participative and practical in nature. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning, with an activity approach being used to enable learners to develop all the relevant IT skills effectively. The underpinning knowledge should be combined with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities.

The table below suggests some activities which could support the delivery of this Unit and which may suit the needs of learners with different learning styles.

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Using spreadsheet applications or emerging equivalent technologies	<p>Completing and manipulating a workbook to aid analysis by using advanced formulae.</p> <p>Formulae, functions and features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ arithmetical ◆ sum if ◆ count if ◆ rounding ◆ V and H lookups ◆ named cells and ranges ◆ sorting — vertical (two columns) horizontal ◆ filtering ◆ grouping ◆ subtotalling ◆ conditional formatting ◆ comments — add, edit, remove <p>Data consolidation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ summary worksheets using 3D references ◆ pivot tables ◆ pivot charts 	<p>Various scenarios which will allow learners to manipulate data within worksheets — this could involve working with costings, budgets, expenses, wages, and sales.</p> <p>Presenting information in chart format, eg survey responses, budgets, attendance.</p>

	<p>Managing workbooks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ simultaneously insert and format data and/or formulae (linking worksheets) <p>Importing and exporting data from/to Word or Access.</p> <p>Dynamically-linked data — link spreadsheet data as a table and/or chart in word processing or presentation software.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ printing — completed worksheet/s, sections, value and formulae view ◆ separate or embedded chart 	
<p>Using database applications or emerging equivalent technologies</p>	<p>Work with relational databases.</p> <p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ create and edit relationships between tables (one to many and one to one) ◆ use primary and foreign keys ◆ add, delete and modify data <p>Finding information — search/query the database using advanced functions on a minimum of two fields from multiple tables using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ and, or, null, not ◆ mathematical operators ◆ wild cards ◆ aggregate functions, eg sum, count average, maximum and minimum ◆ calculated fields, creating, formatting and 	<p>Working with relational databases to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ mail merge delegate/customer/supplier information into letters, invitations, delegate lists ◆ interrogate the database to provide statistical information to managers on inventory (stock) levels, uptake figures or spending patterns for example

	<p>labelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ advanced sort <p>Working with forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ create form ◆ modify properties ◆ enhance appearance (move, align, delete and edit components) ◆ headers and footers <p>Presenting findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ create report ◆ grouping data ◆ order/sort data ◆ summary calculations ◆ editing field names ◆ insert report/page headers/footers <p>Printing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ extract/s, queries, forms and reports <p>Exporting data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ to spreadsheet, word processing and presentation applications 	
<p>Using word processing/desktop publishing applications or emerging equivalent technologies</p>	<p>Create or edit a range of business documents by using advanced functions and ensuring that the house style is complied with; documents could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ letter ◆ form ◆ itinerary ◆ business reports 	<p>Working in word processing/desktop publishing to produce documents such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ personal CVs ◆ letters, eg application, thank you, enquiry ◆ reports of research findings ◆ electronic forms

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ newsletters ◆ agenda ◆ minutes <p>Working with documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ create, delete and edit references: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — table of contents — bookmarks — cross-references — endnotes and footnotes ◆ insert, delete page and sections breaks ◆ alter page orientation in different sections ◆ insert headers or footers linked or separated within different sections ◆ format first page differently from subsequent pages ◆ using review functions such as comments, word count, thesaurus ◆ use watermarks ◆ create, modify and use styles <p>Tables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ creating or editing a table ◆ enhance presentation using layout and design functions ◆ convert text to table/table to text ◆ formulae in table ◆ sorting table <p>Forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ create or edit a form, which can be used 	
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	<p>electronically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ use of different types of fields ◆ protect form <p>Importing data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ from a database, spreadsheet, word file or internet ◆ dynamically lined data and/or chart from a spreadsheet <p>DTP functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using functions of desktop publishing to produce and/or edit a document, such as newsletter and promotional material <p>Mail merge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ merging data from any application (spreadsheet, database or word) into a business document 	
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The table above gives examples of learning and teaching activities that may be used when delivering the Course. This would be classified as naturally occurring evidence which could be used to demonstrate that the learner has met the Assessment Standards within the Unit Specification.

Combining assessment within Units

The evidence for this Unit will be generated through practical IT-based activities. Although the Outcomes may be assessed either separately or holistically, combined assessment is recommended. However, it must be clear how the evidence covers each Outcome.

When assessment within the Unit is combined, teachers/lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each individual Outcome to ensure that learners who do not achieve all Outcomes may still get the recognition for the Outcome or Outcomes they have achieved.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work](#)
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment](#)
- ◆ [Course Specification](#)
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- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
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Administrative information

Published: September 2015 (version 1.1)

History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	'Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment' section amended to provide additional support.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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Unit Support Notes — Communication in Administration (Higher)



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

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Communication in Administration* (Higher) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the *Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Assessment Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to enable learners to develop a range of IT skills, some of them advanced, for communicating complex information to others. Learners will develop an understanding of barriers to communication and ways of overcoming them to ensure communication is understood. The Unit will also develop learners' knowledge and understanding of how to maintain the security and confidentiality of information. This foundation will enable learners to communicate information in ways that take account of the needs of the audience.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ communicate complex information to a range of audiences and effectively manage sensitive information

Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit 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:

- ◆ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 5) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 5) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the Higher Administration and IT *Course Support Notes*.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit may provide progression to:

- ◆ other qualifications in Administration and IT or related areas at SCQF level 7
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

Learning and teaching approaches should be learner-centred, participative and practical in nature. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning, with an activity approach being used to enable learners to develop all the relevant IT and communication skills effectively. The underpinning knowledge should be combined with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities.

The table below suggests some activities which could support Unit delivery and which may suit the needs of learners with different learning styles.

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Electronic communication	<p>Select and use appropriate methods of communication to disseminate complex information, taking account of its context, audience and purpose:</p> <p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ adding slides and content to presentation: ◆ promote and demote slides and text within slides ◆ add data from the internet, spreadsheet or database ◆ create notes ◆ advance slides automatically timed to accommodate speaker notes ◆ create a hyperlink within presentation, to URL and electronic documents ◆ customise animation and transition ◆ create a loop presentation ◆ embed multimedia ◆ use of masters (slide and handout) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ providing examples of reliable/unreliable sources of information ◆ using shared areas/intranet to upload files ◆ communicating electronically using tools such as blogs, discussions groups, instant messaging ◆ creating documents and/or presentations for real events ◆ using e-mail to encourage a paperless environment, eg homework, invitations for events, class work, peer assessment ◆ scenarios which would allow learners to adjust information to meet the needs of an audience, for example taking a lengthy report and preparing it for delivery at a staff meeting ◆ researching new articles highlighting when data security has not been maintained

	<p>E-diary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ enter/edit appointments ◆ recurring appointments ◆ task manager ◆ selected printouts <p>E-mail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ send, receive and print e-mail ◆ mailing lists ◆ create and manage folders ◆ automatically manage messages ◆ create automated responses ◆ be aware of e-mail etiquette <p>Publications</p> <p>Creating and editing publications, newsletters, notices — through the use of a range of different software packages</p> <p>Communication and research</p> <p>Receive, process and transmit information using intranet, internet, e-mails, blogs, presentations, documents, podcasts, social networking sites or other emerging equivalent technologies.</p> <p>Reliability and value of the information gathered can be assessed and judged in comparison to alternative sources.</p> <p>Appropriate communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using electronic communication methods to communicate information in ways appropriate to its context, audience and purpose ◆ making appropriate adjustments when communicating information 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ showing an understanding of the possible barriers to ensure information is received and understood <p>Security and confidentiality Taking appropriate steps to manage information and understanding how to maintain security and confidentiality with reference to appropriate legislation and in-house procedures.</p>	
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Combining assessment within Units

The Outcomes in this Unit may be assessed either separately or holistically. When the latter approach is used, it must be clear how the evidence covers each Outcome. With combined assessment, learners could use technology, for research and communicating information, in the context of a holistic activity.

When assessment within the Unit is combined, teachers/lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each individual Outcome to ensure that learners who do not achieve all Outcomes may still get the recognition for the Outcome or Outcomes they have achieved.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the Higher Administration and IT *Course Support Notes*.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

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