

National 4 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).

Contents

Course Support Notes

Introduction	1
General guidance on the Course	2
Approaches to learning and teaching	6
Approaches to assessment	9
Equality and inclusion	11
Appendix 1: Reference documents	12
Administrative information	13

Unit Support Notes — Administrative Practices (National 4) 14

Introduction	15
General guidance on the Unit	16
Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment	17
Equality and inclusion	24
Appendix 1: Reference documents	25
Administrative information	26

Unit Support Notes — IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4) 27

Introduction	28
General guidance on the Unit	29
Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment	30
Equality and inclusion	37
Appendix 1: Reference documents	38
Administrative information	39

Unit Support Notes — Communication in Administration (National 4) 40

Introduction	41
General guidance on the Unit	42
Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment	43

Equality and inclusion	48
Appendix 1: Reference documents	49
Administrative information	50

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the National 4 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 *Added Value Unit Specification*, and the Unit Specifications for the Units in the Course.

General guidance on the Course

Aims

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

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 and knowledge required by one or more of the following, or by equivalent qualifications or experience:

- ◆ Administration and IT (National 3) Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 3) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 3) Unit

Experiences and outcomes

National Courses have been designed to draw on and build on the curriculum experiences and outcomes as appropriate. Qualifications developed for the senior phase of secondary education are benchmarked against SCQF levels. SCQF level 4 and the curriculum level 4 are broadly equivalent in terms of level of demand, although qualifications at SCQF level 4 will be more specific to allow for more specialist study of subjects.

Learners who have completed Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes will find these an appropriate basis for doing the Course.

In this Course, the experiences and outcomes from the Technologies curriculum area, which are listed below, will be particularly relevant.

Organiser	Experiences and outcomes — fourth curriculum level
ICT to enhance learning	I can approach familiar and new situations with confidence when selecting and using appropriate software to solve increasingly complex problems or issues. TCH 4-03a
	I can use ICT effectively in different learning contexts across the curriculum to access, select and present relevant information in a range of tasks. TCH 4-03b
	Throughout my learning, I can make effective use of a computer system to process and organise information. TCH 4-04a

<p>Business contexts for developing technological skills and knowledge</p>	<p>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. TCH 4-05a</p> <p>To facilitate the transfer of skills between classroom and the world of work, I can select and use specialist equipment and appropriate software to develop administrative and management skills. TCH 4-06a</p> <p>Whilst working in a simulated or real workplace, I can select and use appropriate software to carry out a range of tasks which support business and entrepreneurial activities. TCH 4-07a</p> <p>Whilst working in a simulated or real workplace, I can examine my work environment, considering office layout, ergonomic factors, and health and safety legislation. TCH 4-07b</p>
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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 *Added Value Unit Specification* for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course.

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

Learners should be given the opportunity to develop IT skills using functions of commonly used software applications.

In each reference to desktop publishing, it should be noted that documents could also be produced using a word processing application and that desktop publishing merely refers to the use of templates.

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 — albeit those small in scale and limited in complexity.

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

Mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding	Administrative Practices	IT Solutions for Administrators	Communication in Administration
Duties, skills and qualities 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 and benefits of good customer care	✓		

In general, the skills listed in this section will support the development of aspects of listening and talking, numeracy, namely information handling, as well as employability and thinking skills. A fuller explanation of how these skills relate to the development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given further on in these *Course Support Notes*.

Progression from this Course

This Course or its components may provide progression to:

- ◆ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ further study, employment 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

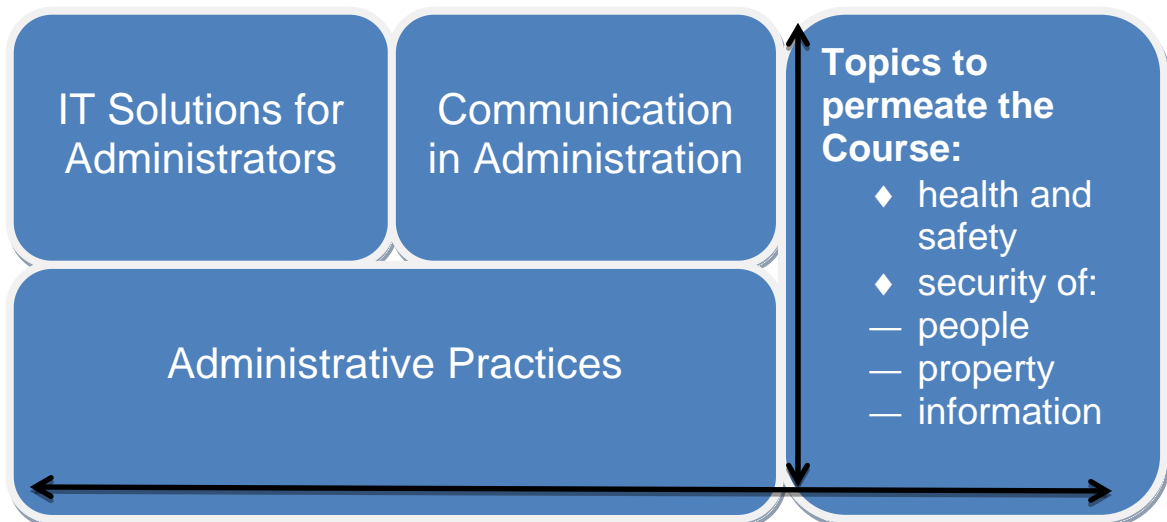
Learning and teaching approaches should be learner-centred, participative and practical in nature. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning, with an activity-based approach being used to enable learners to develop all the relevant skills effectively. 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 collaboratively and assume shared responsibility
- ◆ operate within an administrative context
- ◆ prioritise tasks and work within deadlines
- ◆ acquire, extend and apply administration and IT-related knowledge, understanding and skills
- ◆ create and present business documents to an appropriate 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 resources, such as internet clips, TV, DVDs, CD-ROMs, videos, photographs or business leaflets, books or trade journals. Use could also be made of the 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 using presentation applications.

Teachers/lecturers should appreciate that this subject is constantly changing, which is why it is important to keep abreast of 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, skills for life and skills for work which this Course develops include aspects of literacy, 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 table below.

Skill	How it is developed
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ listening to and following instructions ◆ participating in group discussions ◆ asking and answering questions ◆ making presentations ◆ interviewing administration personnel in the centre ◆ collaborating with others when organising and supporting small-scale events ◆ listening to guest speakers ◆ carrying out mystery shopping
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ extracting information from graphical formats in a variety of media ◆ understanding and interpreting research data, eg tables, charts, graphs and written information ◆ using the information and/or data from the internet and intranet to produce simple documents and presentations
Employability, enterprise and citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ researching duties, skills and qualities of administrators ◆ working with others ◆ maintaining appropriate personal appearance and dressing appropriately ◆ being punctual and managing time ◆ showing flexibility, resilience, initiative and responsibility ◆ using a range of software packages for research and accurate presentation of information

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 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 ◆ recognising administration and IT-related information which has been previously examined ◆ locating the source of information and data previously examined ◆ understanding/explaining the role of administration in the workplace ◆ understanding/explaining the importance of observing health and safety and security of people, property and information ◆ understanding/explaining the basic functions of spreadsheets, databases and word processing software or emerging equivalent technologies ◆ using knowledge of health, safety and security by applying it in different contexts ◆ understanding/describing the key features of good customer care ◆ applying administration and IT-related skills and understanding

The *Added Value Unit* will consolidate the generic skills of listening and talking, information handling, ICT, employability and thinking skills.

The development of both administration and IT-specific and generic skills will be central to this Course, and teachers/lecturers should make learners aware of the skills they are developing and of the transferability of the generic ones. It is the transferability that will help learners with further study and enhance their personal effectiveness and employability in a range of sectors.

Approaches to assessment

There are different approaches to assessment, and assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, as well as understanding of their learners and their varying needs, to determine the most appropriate ones and, where necessary, to consider workable alternatives.

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 learner. 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
- ◆ print-outs of completed tasks
- ◆ 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 may be used as a contribution towards Unit assessment.

Added value

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of added value. At National 4 the added value will be assessed in the Added Value Unit. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment.

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

The added value assessment amounts to more than the sum of Unit assessments, and teachers/lecturers should prepare their learners for the demands it imposes. They should use much of the time allocated to the Added Value Unit for consolidating and integrating the material covered in the other

three Units, revising the work done over the entire programme and offering learners any necessary additional support. Since skills in particular take a long time to develop, teachers/lecturers should give learners plenty of opportunities to practise their administrative and IT skills.

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.

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(s) 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 amendments to wording in the 'Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Course' section.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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Unit Support Notes — Administrative Practices (National 4)



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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Administrative Practices (National 4) 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 *Added Value Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to give learners a basic appreciation of administration in the workplace and to enable them to carry out a range of straightforward administrative tasks in the context of organising and supporting small-scale events.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ Provide an overview of administration in the workplace
- ◆ Carry out administrative tasks in the context of organising and supporting small-scale events, according to a simple brief

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 3 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 3) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 3) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the Administration and IT (National 4) *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit or its components may provide progression to:

- ◆ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ further study, employment 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. 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
Tasks, skills and qualities of an administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the tasks, skills and qualities of administrators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using the internet and newspapers to find job descriptions and person specifications ◆ creating a simple job advert, job description or person specification for an administrative assistant position ◆ interviewing administrative personnel within the centre ◆ inviting guest speakers who recruit, or work as, administrative assistants ◆ conducting mock interviews for administrative posts ◆ simulating the administrative workplace in the class and having an outside administration expert assess learners' skills and qualities as they perform tasks ◆ visiting administrative departments in or outwith the centre ◆ watching clips/films illustrating good qualities and bad qualities of administrative assistants ◆ completing theory questions naming the duties and skills/qualities of administrative assistants
Customer care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the key features of good customer service ◆ the benefits of good customer service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using the internet to look at the customer care statements of well-known organisations ◆ interviewing family members/friends about their customer care experiences ◆ using multimedia resources to look at good customer care and poor customer care

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ conducting customer care assessment of the centre's canteen ◆ setting up a blog where learners can post their customer care experiences, both good and bad, throughout the year ◆ finding information about organisations which are well known for good customer care ◆ mystery shopping — giving learners a list of quality checks and asking them to pretend to be a mystery shopper in an organisation of their choice and to present back to the class ◆ acting out different scenarios based on different types of customers ◆ inviting guest speakers (eg customer care managers or store managers) to share their customer care policy and the benefits of looking after customers
<p>Health and safety and the security of people, property and information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the key employee responsibilities in terms of health and safety and the security of people, property and information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — health and safety issues — understanding what the employee must do to observe health and safety rules in accordance with the current legislation — identification of hazards in the office and measures to ensure safe practice — completion of an accident report form — using identification and secure entry systems — following organisational procedures to protect property, eg putting personal belongings in lockers, not giving access codes to others, locking up portable devices — following organisational procedures to protect paper and electronic information, eg changing passwords, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ touring the centre or an outside business to identify health and safety and security measures and identifying the employee's responsibilities ◆ using case studies highlighting good and bad employee practices ◆ using 'spot the hazard' workplace pictures ◆ using multimedia resources exemplifying good and bad health and safety and security employee practices ◆ designing and displaying simple posters to remind staff of health and safety matters and their responsibilities ◆ using Health and Safety Executive resources/website ◆ creating a simple security checklist and assessing the security of people and property of their chosen organisation or asking a family member/friend about their security responsibilities in their workplace ◆ studying the centre's policies and procedures for security and health and safety — matching to employee

	encrypting documents, locking storage, locking monitors when not at desk	responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ password protecting electronic files◆ implementing good file management techniques throughout the Course
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<p>Organising and supporting small-scale events</p>	<p>Carrying out straightforward planning tasks for the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ preparing a to-do list/priorities list ◆ entering details into an e-diary ◆ checking the availability of rooms and how to book them ◆ using spreadsheets/databases/websites to produce/access relevant information ◆ selecting resources from a given list ◆ creating a basic room layout plan <p>Editing documents to support the event, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using word processing to prepare a basic agenda ◆ using desktop publishing to prepare basic name badges, advertising, invitations, place-cards, tickets ◆ using databases to produce details of delegates/performers ◆ using spreadsheets to produce/access relevant information for use during the event ◆ using presentation software to prepare a basic presentation for a key speaker <p>Carrying out follow-up activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ preparing a basic evaluation form ◆ presenting evaluation responses, eg chart, preparing thank you letters (to the venue, host, participants and guests) ◆ preparing basic minutes ◆ calculating actual event costs 	<p>Events, real or simulated, may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ meetings ◆ school events, eg dances, ceilidhs, parents' information evenings, careers fairs, trips, assemblies ◆ fundraising/charity events, eg coffee mornings ◆ book-club meetings ◆ interviews ◆ business trips ◆ promotional events ◆ presentations ◆ award ceremonies ◆ attending exhibitions <p>The specific tasks and activities involved in organising and supporting an event will depend on its type and could include:</p> <p>Carrying out straightforward planning tasks for the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using planning tools — e-diary, to-do list, priorities list ◆ researching the centre's facilities and resources using its intranet ◆ gathering information about catering ◆ using the internet to gather information about external accommodation ◆ using the internet to gather travel information ◆ creating a resources checklist ◆ creating letters requesting permission ◆ creating e-mails/letters to attendees/guest speakers ◆ budgeting ◆ creating letters/e-mails to the caterer listing requirements
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		<p>Editing documentation to support the event :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ amending an attendee database ◆ creating/updating an itinerary for an attendee/guest ◆ maps and directions for attendees/guests ◆ name badges and direction signs for the event ◆ attendee packs ◆ documentation for use at the event, eg reports, spreadsheet, charts, presentation, brochures, information leaflet ◆ a basic agenda and the chairperson’s agenda ◆ advertisement materials for display at the event ◆ a presentation to run in the background of the event <p>Carrying out follow-up activities appropriate to the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ creating a simple feedback form — online or otherwise ◆ preparing simple action minutes ◆ writing thank you letters to attendees and guests ◆ amending spreadsheet or database details ◆ updating a newsletter/website
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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.

There are a number of assessment strategies that could be used in this Unit, including:

- ◆ completing computer-based tasks that include short answer theory questions
- ◆ submitting a portfolio of tasks that meet all Outcomes and Assessment Standards

Information about assessment approaches in this Unit is given in the National 4 Administration and IT *Course Support Notes*.

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*.

Combining assessment within Units

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.

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 approaches 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

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History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Changes to wording in the 'Approaches to learning and teaching' section for clarification.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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Unit Support Notes — IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4)



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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4) 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 *Added Value Unit 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' basic skills in IT and organising and processing information in administration-related contexts. Learners will use the functions of the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets and databases, to create and edit simple business documents.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ use functions of a spreadsheet in line with a given task
- ◆ use functions of a flat database in line with a given task
- ◆ use functions of word processing in line with a given task

Progression into this Unit

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 3 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 3) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 3) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the Administration and IT (National 4) *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit or its components may provide progression to:

- ◆ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ further study, employment 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 integrated 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>Formatting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ text alignment ◆ borders and shading ◆ bold, italics, underline ◆ font style and size ◆ currency, decimals and percentages <p>Formulae, functions and features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ basic arithmetical formulae ◆ average ◆ maximum ◆ minimum ◆ count <p>Editing a spreadsheet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ input and edit data ◆ sort data on one column 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ preparing costings and budgets for real or simulated small-scale events ◆ calculating sales revenue ◆ calculating monthly/annual sales and profit figures ◆ calculating commission for businesses or employees ◆ calculating expenses claims for staff ◆ costing various accommodation or catering options ◆ calculating total money raised from fundraising ◆ presenting results from surveys in chart format

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ insert/delete columns/rows <p>Creating a simple chart from a specified range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ pie chart ◆ bar or column chart ◆ line graph <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ labelling charts, including the use of data labels ◆ printing charts embedded in worksheet and presented separately <p>Printing worksheets or extracts of worksheets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ showing value view ◆ showing formulae view ◆ with and without gridlines ◆ with and without row and column headings ◆ in portrait and landscape orientation ◆ with headers and footers ◆ to fit on one page 	
Using database applications or emerging equivalent technologies	<p>Populating and editing a flat database, creating and/or using forms.</p> <p>Manipulating information in a flat database. This will involve searching and sorting.</p>	<p>Working with database files:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ address book ◆ supplier list ◆ customer list ◆ list of attendees for an event

	<p>Search the database using the following operators on one field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ equals◆ greater than◆ less than◆ greater than◆ less than <p>Sorting the database on one field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ ascending◆ descending <p>Presenting information from a flat database in a report format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ produce a database report◆ produce reports from a table or search◆ insert footer/header <p>Print with all or selected fields visible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ database◆ search results◆ forms◆ reports◆ fit on one page	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ employee details◆ branch details◆ employee training details
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<p>Using word processing applications or emerging equivalent technologies</p>	<p>Creating and editing simple business documents, complying with the prescribed house style:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ select and change font, font size ◆ set and change margins ◆ carry out manuscript corrections ◆ use bold, italics, underline ◆ align text ◆ change line spacing ◆ indenting ◆ insert graphic ◆ use bullets and numbering ◆ insert headers and footers ◆ borders and shading ◆ page numbering <p>Creating a simple table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ insert, delete or amend data ◆ add or delete row/s ◆ add or delete column/s ◆ change column widths ◆ change row height ◆ include/remove borders ◆ insert shading within cells ◆ sort data on one column <p>Integrating data from other IT applications into a business document to enhance it:</p>	<p>Creating simple business documents that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ letters, eg application, thank you, enquiry ◆ forms, eg electronic travel form, booking form ◆ an itinerary ◆ an agenda ◆ a personal CV ◆ reports of research findings ◆ staff handbook ◆ monthly report ◆ leaflet
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ data and/or chart from a spreadsheet ◆ data from a database ◆ information from the internet ◆ information from a word processed document <p>Printing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ completed document ◆ specific pages 	
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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. This could include submitting a portfolio of computer-based tasks that meet all Outcomes and Assessment Standards.

Information about assessment approaches in this Unit is given in the National 4 Administration and IT *Course Support Notes*.

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*.

Combining assessment within Units

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.

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 approaches 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	Changes to wording in the 'Approaches to learning and teaching' section for clarification.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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Unit Support Notes — Communication in Administration (National 4)



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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 (National 4) 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 *Added Value Unit 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 use IT for gathering and sharing information with others in familiar administration-related contexts. Learners will develop an understanding of the appropriate methods for gathering information and of how to communicate information, making use of appropriate electronic methods.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ use technology to gather information in line with a simple brief
- ◆ use functions of technology to prepare and communicate simple information in line with a simple brief

Progression into this Unit

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:

- ◆ National 3 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 3) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 3) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 4 Administration and IT *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit or its components may provide progression to:

- ◆ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ further study, employment and 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
Communication in Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ searching for and extracting/downloading relevant information from the internet ◆ using search engines ◆ navigating hyperlinks ◆ copying information from a web page to a another document, eg a word processing document, presentation, leaflet, etc ◆ using favourites/bookmarks ◆ printing information and/or an extract of information ◆ inserting a hyperlink from a web-based source into another document, eg word processing document, presentation, leaflet, etc ◆ searching for and extracting/downloading relevant information using an internal network (intranet) <p>The specifics of this will depend on the set-up of intranets within individual educational establishments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using internet for research, eg travel information, maps, venues, accommodation ◆ providing practical examples of reliable/unreliable sources of information ◆ using shared areas on the centre's network/intranet ◆ using other online networks and VLEs
	<p>Using functions of technology to prepare and communicate simple information:</p> <p>Using presentation software to produce simple presentations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ creating presentations and desktop publishing documents to support real events ◆ preparing presentations for others to use ◆ preparing presentations to show on an LCD screen for visitors ◆ using desktop publishing to create documents that

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ insert, edit and format text ◆ align text ◆ insert graphics from an e-file or the internet ◆ use bullets ◆ create chart(s) and/or table(s) ◆ add and delete a slide ◆ animate text/objects ◆ import data from other applications/internet ◆ change slide content layout ◆ apply slide transitions ◆ change slide order ◆ apply and change background, design and colour scheme ◆ print presentation in slide and handout format <p>Using desktop publishing to produce a simple document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using appropriate templates ◆ creating documents of an appropriate size ◆ select and change font, font size ◆ set and change margins ◆ insert text, delete text, move text, format text ◆ insert graphic ◆ insert headers and footers ◆ borders and shading <p>Using electronic methods to communicate information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ use e-mail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — compose e-mail by entering text — send to one or more recipients — read mail and use reply feature — use address book — mark urgent 	<p>could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — posters — leaflets — newsletters — invites — booklets — business cards — certificates — tickets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ exploring opportunities for cross-curricular links in order to improve the aesthetics of presentations and desktop publishing documents ◆ using e-mail to encourage a paperless environment, eg homework, invitations for events, class work, peer assessment ◆ uploading files to the centre's intranet/network, eg photographs, presentation, notices
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — add attachment/s — create signature ◆ use emerging technologies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — blogs — podcasts — instant messaging — forums ◆ use an e-diary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — schedule appointment – specific times and all day events — set reminder — print calendar: daily, weekly, monthly view 	
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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. This could include submitting a portfolio of computer-based tasks that meet all Outcomes and Assessment Standards.

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- ◆ [Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool](#)
- ◆ [SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools](#)
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