

National 5 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 National 5 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 an understanding of administration in the workplace and key legislation affecting both organisations and employees
- ◆ develop an understanding of good customer care and its benefits to organisations
- ◆ develop IT skills and use them to perform administrative tasks
- ◆ acquire organisational skills in the context of organising and supporting 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 experience and/or qualifications:

- ◆ National 4 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 4) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 4) Unit

Experiences and outcomes

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

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.

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

Learners should be given the opportunity to develop IT skills using functions of commonly used applications and/or emerging equivalent technologies.

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.

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
Tasks, skills and qualities required of administrators	✓		
Skills in using the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets, databases, presentations and desktop publishing, in administrative contexts		✓	✓
Skills in organising and supporting events	✓	✓	✓
Skills in using technology, including the internet, for electronic communication and investigation in administrative contexts			✓
Knowledge and understanding of key legislation affecting organisations	✓		
Knowledge and understanding of the benefits to organisations of good customer care	✓		
Skills in organising, managing and communicating information in administrative contexts		✓	✓
Problem solving skills in administrative contexts	✓	✓	✓

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:

- ◆ Higher 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.

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

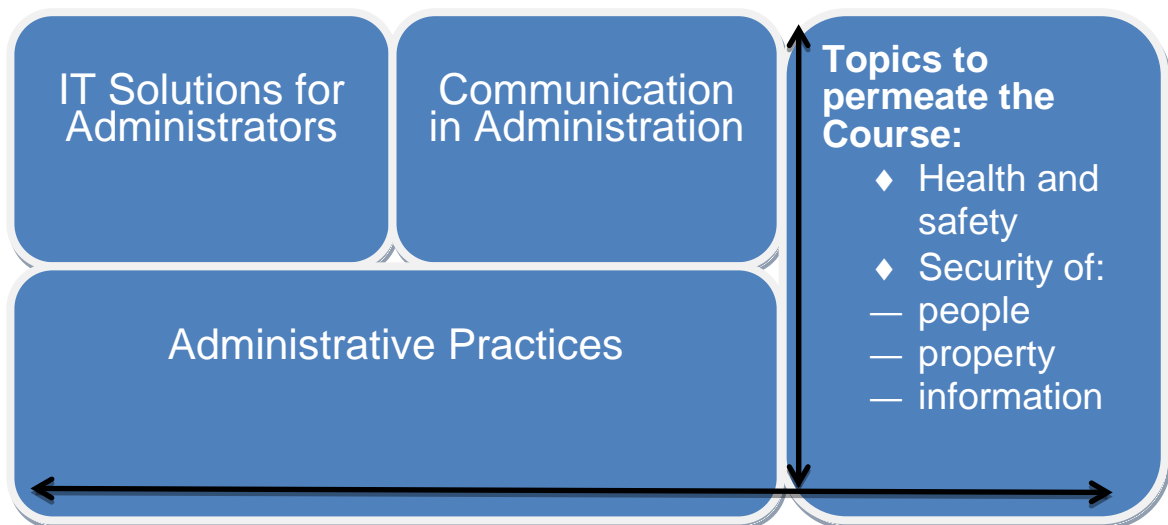
To the learners who might exceed the SCQF level they are working at, a hierarchical arrangement gives the opportunity to have their best achievements recognised. For those who might fall short in some areas, on the other hand, it provides fallback. A hierarchical arrangement also enables learners to work at different levels in one class, and it is indeed 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 approach being used to enable learners to develop all the relevant skills effectively. The underpinning knowledge should be integrated 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 skills, knowledge and understanding
- ◆ create and present business documents to an appropriate and professional standard
- ◆ be involved in self and peer assessment



To make the Course engaging, teachers/lecturers could also use, and encourage learners to use, a wide variety of resources, such as websites, internet clips, TV programmes, DVDs, CD-ROMs, videos, photographs, business leaflets, books or trade journals. Use could also be made of contacts with industry partners and visits to local businesses.

Teachers/lecturers should adopt inclusive approaches to learning and teaching, adapting their teaching methods to suit the needs of all learners and using an appropriate balance of teaching methodologies. It should be noted that there is no one single way of covering a topic or developing a skill, and teachers/lecturers should use a variety of teaching and learning approaches.

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 following table.

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 ◆ collaborating with others when organising and supporting 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 documents and presentations
Employability, enterprise and citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ researching duties, skills and qualities of administrators ◆ planning tasks ◆ working with others ◆ maintaining appropriate personal appearance and dressing appropriately

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 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
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 ◆ 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 in the context of organising and supporting events ◆ understanding/explaining the functions of spreadsheets, databases and word processing software or emerging equivalent technologies ◆ applying administration and IT related skills, knowledge and understanding in the context of creating, editing and updating business documents

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 this transferability that will help learners with further study and enhance their personal effectiveness and employability in a range of sectors.

Approaches to assessment

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 assessments 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 of 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 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 may be used as a contribution towards Unit assessment.

Added value

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

Information given in the *Course Specification* and the *Course Assessment 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. Strategies for such preparation are outlined in the section below.

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 for Course assessment.

Skills in particular take a long time to develop and teachers/lecturers should give learners plenty of opportunities to hone them by practising in as many different administrative-based contexts as possible.

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

- ◆ Preparing for the assignment — this time could be used by learners to practise, extend and apply their IT skills and knowledge and understanding in the context of organising and supporting as many different administrative-based events as possible. While real events taking place within centres will provide valuable contexts for learning, it should be noted that the Course assignment will be based around a notional administrative context to ensure the skills, knowledge and understanding demonstrated meets national standards.
- ◆ Revising and preparing for Unit assessments — this can support the Course assignment as it may be done using IT based tasks around supporting an event, which covers multiple Outcomes and could gauge learners' ability to demonstrate the skills required for differentiation in the Course assignment. This is particularly relevant when assessing Administrative Practices.

Teachers/lecturers could use the information on the structure and coverage of the Course assessment given in the *Course Assessment Specification* as a checklist for this purpose.

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 amendment of wording.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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Unit Support Notes — Administrative Practices (National 5)



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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 Practices (National 5) 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 give learners a broad introduction to administration in the workplace and to enable them to carry out a range of administrative tasks in the context of organising and supporting events.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ Provide an account of administration in the workplace
- ◆ Interpret a given brief and carry out appropriate administrative tasks in the context of organising and supporting events

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 4 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 4) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 4) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 5 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:

- ◆ Higher 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.

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Tasks, skills and qualities of an administrative assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the tasks, skills and qualities of administrators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ researching, using the internet and newspapers, to find job descriptions and person specifications ◆ creating a job advert, job description, person specification for an administrative assistant position ◆ creating an interview checklist for an administrative assistant position ◆ conducting mock interviews for administrative positions ◆ having administrative personnel within the centre or a guest speaker assess the quality of learners' IT work ◆ visiting administrative departments within or outwith the centre ◆ watching clips/films illustrating good qualities and bad qualities of administrative assistants ◆ creating a training video showing what makes a good administrator
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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the impact of poor customer service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ interviewing family members/friends about their customer care experiences ◆ researching organisations that are well known for good customer care and the reasons why ◆ 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 — customer care managers, store managers, etc to share their customer care policy and the benefits of looking after customers ◆ designing customer feedback tools ◆ creating a presentation on the features of good customer care
<p>Health and safety and the security of people, property and information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the key organisational responsibilities in terms of health and safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — use of induction training to cover health and safety issues — understanding what employers must do to observe health and safety rules in accordance with current legislation — identification of hazards in the workplace and measures to ensure safe practice — completion of an accident report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ touring the centre or an outside business to identify health and safety and security measures ◆ using case studies highlighting good and bad organisational practices ◆ using 'spot the hazard' workplace pictures ◆ using multimedia resources exemplifying good and bad health and safety and security practice on the part of organisations ◆ using the section on health and safety in

	<p>form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the key organisational responsibilities in terms of security of people, property and information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — understanding organisational responsibilities in relation to identification and secure entry systems — understanding organisational procedures to protect property, eg security marking, cables and blinds ◆ understanding organisational procedures to protect paper and electronic information, eg usernames, passwords, encryption, access rights, lockable storage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ an organisation's induction training video ◆ designing and displaying posters to remind staff of health and safety matters and responsibilities ◆ using Health and Safety Executive (HSE) resources/website ◆ listening to guest speakers — building designers speaking about building security; reception staff speaking about people security; IT technicians speaking about information security ◆ creating a security checklist and assessing the security of people and property of their chosen organisation by visiting it outwith school hours or asking a family member/friend about security in their workplace ◆ studying the centre's policies and procedures for security and health and safety — matching to organisational responsibilities ◆ password protecting electronic files
File Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ features of file management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — appropriately named files and folders — use of named folders — archiving/dead filing — backup — regular anti-virus updates — security on files 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ encouraging good file management practices with candidates work

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ benefits of good file management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — saves time finding files — saves space — less stress for employees looking for files — improved efficiency leads to a good reputation — no duplication means that files are more likely to be up-to-date 	
<p>Organising and supporting events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Events, real or simulated, may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — meetings — school events, eg dances, ceilidhs, parents' information evenings, careers fairs, trips, assemblies — fund-raising/charity events, eg coffee mornings — book club meetings — interviews — business trips — promotional events — presentations — products/business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ carrying out planning tasks, taking account of the budget available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — preparing a to-do list/priorities list — entering details into e-diary — searching for information about the venue and how to book it (taking into account the relevant legislation: Health and Safety, Data Protection, Equality Act) — using spreadsheets to produce/access relevant information, including the budget for the event — selecting appropriate resources — creating a room layout plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ producing documentation to support the event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — attendee database — costings for the event — simple itinerary for an attendee/guest — e-mails/letters to attendees/guest speakers — 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 — agenda and the chairperson's agenda — letter/e-mail to the caterer listing requirements

<p>launches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — press conferences 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — advertisement materials — presentation to run in the background of the event
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ preparing documents to support an event, which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — using word processing to prepare the agenda — using desktop publishing to prepare name badges, advertising, invitations, place-cards — using databases to produce details of delegates/performers and to carry out the following functions: update, search, mail-merge and prepare letters, labels, attendees' report — using spreadsheets to produce/access relevant information, including the budget for the event, mail-merge ◆ using presentation software to prepare a presentation for a key speaker 	<p>The specific tasks and activities involved in organising and supporting an event will depend on its type and could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ carrying out planning tasks appropriate to the event, taking account of the budget available: <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 — researching and selecting catering information — researching and selecting external accommodation using the internet — researching and selecting travel information — creating a resources checklist
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ carrying out follow-up activities appropriate to an event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — preparing an evaluation form — collating responses and presenting findings to include using charts — preparing thank you letters to venue host, participants and guests using 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ carrying out follow-up activities appropriate to the event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — creating a feedback form (online or otherwise) — action minutes — thank you letters to attendees and guests

	mail-merge — preparing minutes	— comparing budget to actual costs — 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 5 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

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 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(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 *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	Minor updating for clarification and consistency.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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Unit Support Notes — IT Solutions for Administrators (National 5)



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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 (National 5) 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 and organising and managing information in administration-related contexts. Learners will interpret a given brief that will help them to develop problem solving skills. Learners will select appropriate IT applications covering word processing, spreadsheets and databases, and will use them to create and edit business documents.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ Use a spreadsheet application to interpret a given brief
- ◆ Use advanced functions of a relational database to interpret a given brief
- ◆ Use advanced functions of word processing to interpret a given brief

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 4 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 4) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 4) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 5 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:

- ◆ Higher Administration and IT Course or relevant component Unit
- ◆ 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 combined with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities.

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use spreadsheet applications or emerging equivalent technologies	Creating, editing and applying advanced functions and formulae to a workbook: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ formatting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — text alignment — different fonts, styles, sizes — currency, date, number to specified decimal places, percentages — borders and shading ◆ functions and formulae: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — arithmetical formulae — average — maximum — minimum — count formulae — if — conditional formatting — link cells within worksheets — use named cells — relative and absolute cell references — sort data ◆ creating a chart and labelling it independently using data from adjacent and non-adjacent columns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — pie chart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ preparing costings and budgets for real or simulated events ◆ presenting results from surveys in chart format

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — bar or column chart — line graph ◆ labelling charts meaningfully, including the use of data labels ◆ printing charts embedded in worksheets and presented separately ◆ printing charts with identifiable labels either by colour, labelling or patterns (when using B&W charts) ◆ printing worksheets and extracts of worksheets: <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 	
<p>Use database applications or emerging equivalent technologies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Populating and editing a relational database: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — input and edit data making using of forms — alter date format and decimal places — add and delete field(s) and record(s) ◆ manipulating information in a relational database — this will involve searching and sorting ◆ searching the database using the following operators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — equals — greater than — less than — greater than or equal to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ working with database files: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — address book — supplier list — customer list — list of attendees for an event

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — less than or equal to — or — not ◆ presenting information in a report, to a professional standard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — produce a database report — produce reports from selected fields from a table or search — insert a footer/header ◆ print: (database, search results, specified fields, forms, reports, to fit on one page) 	
<p>Use word processing applications or emerging equivalent technologies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ editing business documents, applying the house style: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — select and change font, font size — set and change margins — insert text, delete text, move text — carry out manuscript corrections — enhance text, eg bold, italics, underline — align text — change line spacing — insert graphics — bullets and numbering — insert headers and footers — borders and shading — page numbering ◆ creating and/or editing tables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — insert, delete or amend data — add or delete row(s) and column(s) — borders and shading — merge cells — rotate text within cells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ preparing the following documents, which may contain multiple pages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — letters (eg application, thank you, enquiry) — reports — forms (eg travel forms, booking forms) — minutes — agendas — itineraries

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — formulae — sort data ◆ integrating data from other IT applications dynamically into a business document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — data and/or chart from a spreadsheet — data from a database — information from the internet ◆ merging appropriate data from spreadsheet and/or database applications into a business document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — address labels — letters — report — name badges — forms — certificates ◆ printing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — completed document — document showing merge fields — 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 5 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

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 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(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 *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	Minor amendment for consistency.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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Unit Support Notes — Communication in Administration (National 5)



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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 5) 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 use IT for gathering and sharing information with others in administration-related contexts. Learners will develop an understanding of what constitutes a reliable source of information and an ability to identify and use the most appropriate methods for gathering information. They will also become able to communicate information, using electronic methods, to a professional standard.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ Use technology to extract information, and be able to evaluate sources of information
- ◆ Use advanced functions of technology to prepare and communicate information, by interpreting a given brief, to convey a professional image

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 4 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Literacy (National 4) Unit
- ◆ Numeracy (National 4) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 5 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:

- ◆ Higher 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — open browser — use search engines — navigate hyperlinks — copy information from web page to word processing document and presentation — use favourites/bookmarks — print information and/or an extract of information The specifics of this will depend on the set-up of intranets within individual educational establishments. ◆ features of reliable sources of internet information for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — non-bias — complete/sufficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using internet for research, eg travel information, maps, venues, accommodation ◆ using shared areas on the centre's network/intranet ◆ using other online networks and virtual learning environments ◆ providing practical examples of reliable/unreliable sources of information ◆ creating a list of reputable websites that could be used for specific tasks (eg sites for flights, directions, hotels)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — accurate — regularly updated site — reputation of author <p>◆ consequences of using unreliable internet sources of information may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — missed meetings — wrong decisions are made — the organisation gets a bad reputation — the organisation loses money — the organisation loses opportunities 	
	<p>◆ Features of corporate image:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — standardised colours, fonts, graphics — logo — slogan — staff uniform — store layout — standardised responses to FAQs — consistent presentation of IT documents/house style <p>◆ Benefits of having a corporate image:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — instantly recognisable brand — more professional reputation — staff are more consistent so that customers are dealt with fairly 	<p>◆ researching different organisations to identify ways they promote their corporate image</p> <p>◆ encouraging candidates to show consistency in documents across a series of tasks/an event</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This can be implemented through policy statements, training, employing specialised staff and having an effective recruitment and selection procedure. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using advanced functions of technology to prepare and communicate information, to convey a professional image ◆ creating new presentations and amend existing presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — insert, delete and edit text — format text — insert and delete a graphic — bullets and numbers — create chart/s and/or table/s — add and delete a slide — animate text/objects — import data — change slide content layout — apply slide transitions — change slide order — apply and change background, colour scheme and/or apply design templates — insert footer objects — insert action buttons — use slide master — print presentation in slide and handout format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ assessing presentations and desktop publishing documents created by peers, teachers and others to provide feedback (which would encourage further improvement) ◆ creating presentations and desktop publishing documents to be used for real events ◆ 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 ◆ maintaining a professional image when preparing to communicate information – this could be a corporate image (using logos and consistent styles), appropriate language and taking account of the target audience

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Using functions of desktop publishing to produce a document:<ul style="list-style-type: none">— using templates— set and change margins— insert, delete, move, format text— insert graphic— insert headers and footers— borders and shading ◆ Using electronic methods to communicate information which could include: ◆ using e-mail:<ul style="list-style-type: none">— compose e-mail by entering text and send— address book facility— mark urgent— adding attachment/s— creating signature ◆ using emerging technologies:<ul style="list-style-type: none">— blogs— podcasts— websites— social media— virtual learning environments	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ using an e-diary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — schedule appointment — set reminder — print calendar: daily, weekly, monthly view — schedule recurrent meetings — accessing other users calendars — schedule tasks 	
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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 5 Administration and IT *Course Support Notes*.

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

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