



COMMUNICATION
INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY
NUMERACY
WORKING WITH
OTHERS
PROBLEM SOLVING

Core Skills Bulletin

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Contents

Version 2 of the NQ Core Skills Units and ASPs

Changes to NC and NPA frameworks

Development of exemplar materials for NQ Core Skills

Core Skills contacts

Version 2 of the NQ Core Skills Units and ASPs

The new NQ Core Skills Units were first published on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) in August 2008 along with a set of Assessment Support Packs (ASPs). Since the new Units were made available we have received very positive feedback from a range of centres who are pleased with the flexibility offered within the new Unit specifications. However, suggestions were also received during the first year that some minor changes could be made to the ASPs and Units which might help clarify certain points of uncertainty and ambiguity within the standards. For this reason, we have now completed some minor revision work leading to the publication of revised versions of the Units and ASPs on our website. Copies of the revised versions in Communication, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology and Problem Solving are available now on the Core Skills section of the website. These revised versions will be known as **Version 2**. (Please note: Working with Others will be added at a later date.)

A short summary of the amendments made to the Version 1 Units and ASPs is also available on the Core Skills pages of SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk/coreskills).

It should be stressed that the revisions that have been made are minor and seek to provide clarification rather than a change to the standard. The Unit numbers will remain unchanged, in fact, one of the amendments we have made is to show the Unit number prominently on the front page (and on page footers) of each Unit and ASP. This should make identification of the Version 2 documents straightforward and should hopefully prevent centres becoming confused with regard to which version they are using.

We would encourage all centres to begin using the Version 2 Units and ASPs at the earliest opportunity.

Changes to NC and NPA frameworks

We have received a number of enquiries from centres with regard to Core Skills Units that appear within existing National Certificate (NC) or National Progression Award (NPA) frameworks. Centres have asked whether they can use the new Core Skills Units instead of the old Units, where 'old' Unit codes (pre-August 2008 versions) are quoted within Group Award frameworks.

We can advise that where any of the 'old' Core Skills Unit codes were included within the frameworks of current Group Awards, the new Units will automatically be added to those frameworks, allowing candidates to complete either the old or the new Core Skills Unit as part of the overall Group Award. To make this as clear as possible for centres, all frameworks will be updated within SQA.net to show both the old and the new Units as either/or alternatives. Centres should note that although SQA has still to complete this visual update in SQA.net, a mechanism is already in place within the SQA Awards Processing System which will ensure that either the old or the new Units will be recognised as either/or alternatives within existing frameworks.

Approval for the new Core Skills Units is on a new for old basis, so centres that had approval for the old Core Skill Units will automatically be approved to offer the new Core Skills Units in the same subjects and levels.

Development of exemplar material for NQ Core Skills

We have now begun work on the development of exemplar materials to support the new NQ Core Skills Units. The exemplars will highlight a range of approaches that can be taken to gathering evidence for the NQ Core Skills Units. Initially the development will focus on Communication, Numeracy and Information and Communication Technology at SCQF levels 3, 4 and 5.

It is hoped that the first of these materials may be ready by February 2010. Once ready, the exemplars will be posted on SQA's secure website.

Core Skills contacts

Sandy Riddell (Project Manager)

E-mail: sandy.riddell@sqa.org.uk

Tel: 0845 213 5569

Sarah Cameron (Qualifications Officer)

E-mail: sarah.cameron@sqa.org.uk

Tel: 0845 213 5527