

27 January 2010

To: SQA Co-ordinators
Secondary Schools and FE Colleges

cc: SQA Business Development Managers

Action by Recipient
Response required
✓ Note and pass on
None - update/information only

Contact Name: Alan Wilson
Direct Line: 0845 213 5519
E-mail: alan.wilson@sqa.org.uk

Dear Colleague

Please pass this letter to the member of staff responsible for English in your school or college.

Writing as part of External Assessment in English

As you may recall, there was an extensive consultation conducted around the country last March/April. During this time, SQA consulted teachers and lecturers delivering NQ Courses in English about their opinions regarding the narrow skill set currently examined and the possibilities of including Writing as a part of the external assessment of the Higher Course.

With almost complete unanimity, all groups consulted in the various locations indicated that writing should be part of the external assessment and that we should not wait until the implementation of the new National Qualifications (Curriculum for Excellence), but act now.

SQA set up a Qualifications Design Team composed of Principal Assessors, teachers, SQA Verifiers, representatives of Local Authorities, SCIS, EIS and LTS to look at how best to include writing without increasing workload unduly and without making major changes to Arrangements. The group met in the autumn and discussed various options.

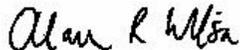
At the most recent meeting of the Design Team, decisions were made which will affect the inclusion of Writing in the external assessment in NQ English. It is planned that revised documentation will be in place for certification in 2011.

The key things to be aware of are:

- ◆ The changes will be to all levels – Higher, Intermediate 2 and Intermediate 1 English – in order to preserve the hierarchy of the three levels
- ◆ The writing will be externally assessed by SQA
- ◆ A folio of two pieces of Writing for Higher and Intermediate 2 and one piece for Intermediate 1 will be submitted at the end of April 2011
- ◆ The weighting for writing at each level will be 20% (Close Reading and Critical Essays each being 40%)
- ◆ The writing pieces will be derived from the Language Study Unit, Outcome 2
- ◆ The existing Arrangements for internal assessment at all three levels remain unchanged

There will be Launch events across the country at the end of April 2010 and a series of further Understanding Standards events in September/October 2010. The materials will be placed on the English pages of the website immediately following these events.

Yours sincerely,



Alan Wilson
Qualifications Manager
National Qualifications