

**Scottish Qualifications Authority**

**National Qualifications Group Award — National Certificate Administration**

**Action Grid — Meeting held on Thursday 5 October 2006**

**Chair:**

**Project Manager:**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Agenda/minute title</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Agreed action and actionee/s</b>	<b>Target date</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and apologies</b>	<b>Members</b> <b>SQA staff</b>		
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Purpose of Meeting</b>	To build the foundations of a National Certificate award in Administration. Establish the way forward to meet stakeholder needs.		
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Background to National Qualifications Group Award</b>	The group were given a brief summary of the portfolio review that was undertaken by SQA. The group were informed of the consultation event which took place at the Thistle Hotel in Glasgow. An update on the background to all the work that was carried out by the group of six consultants who made recommendations as to whether each Unit within Business Education was to be retained, rewritten or revised. In addition to this, advice was sought on the suitability of these Units for the NC awards to feature within the Business Education portfolio. Lists of all the Units, the related uptake for the previous five years and the decisions taken by the consultants were provided to the group. An oral update was given regarding the outcome of the report which summarised the Business Education portfolio review. The National Certificate in Administration should be completed by November 2008, with an implementation date of August 2009.		

		<p>The group were informed of decisions taken as part of the portfolio review and the outcomes of the report would assist in shaping the Units made available as part of the NC Administration. In addition, a brief summary was given on the upcoming work on servicing Units.</p> <p>A presentation was delivered by the development officer to the group to go over key points such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Importance of NC badging</li> <li>◆ Updating Catalogue — some Units go back to 1980.</li> <li>◆ Progression to HN</li> <li>◆ Map the needs of the sector</li> <li>◆ Design principles</li> </ul>		
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Units</b>	<p>The group decided that the NC in Administration should be credited as a level 5 award with optional Units at levels 4, 5 &amp; 6.</p> <p>The group were provided with the design principles.</p> <p>Initial discussion evolved around the size of the award. The design principles require 12 credits of which a minimum of 6 Units must be at the level of the award. It is expected that most centres will deliver beyond the minimum level of 12 credits in order to maintain the retention levels at centres. The group felt that there had to be a qualification that was different from schools and would help students gain knowledge for progression and skills for employment. It is important to ensure the Units are linked to the National Occupational Standards for Administration. The representative from the Council for Administration spoke to the group on</p>		

		<p>research carried out by the CFA on employability skills. These are problem solving, taking initiative, team working and time management skills. Within the Administration sector the CFA divide Administrators into two Specialist Administrators such as Medical and Legal Secretaries. Along with the group's knowledge and experience, this also helped to decide on the following structure for the NC in Administration.</p> <p><b>Mandatory Section</b> — Level 5, there will be 9 Units in the mandatory section; therefore students will always be credited with a level 5 award. The mandatory section will contain the following Units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ ITFA</li> <li>◆ WP</li> <li>◆ Front of office</li> <li>◆ Central systems</li> <li>◆ Managing time and resources</li> <li>◆ Handling business documents</li> <li>◆ Researching and preparing presentations</li> <li>◆ Organising an event</li> <li>◆ Communication</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional Section — Levels 4, 5 &amp; 6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Spreadsheet — Level 6</li> <li>◆ WP x 2 — Levels 4 &amp; 6</li> <li>◆ Communication — Level 6</li> <li>◆ Shorthand x 3 — Level 5</li> </ul>		
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<b>1.4</b>	<b>Core Skills</b>	<p>The group were advised that consideration must be given upfront to core skills that are deemed necessary to this award. These can feature in three ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Naturally as part of the Unit or award</li> <li>2. Signpost within Unit or award</li> <li>3. Embed within Units or award</li> </ol> <p>It was noted by the group however that regardless of the decisions taken with the core skills content, it is vital that these do not skew the award.</p>		
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Level</b>	<p>There are 9 mandatory Units at level 5 that make up the framework; therefore the NC in Administration is a level 5 award as per design principles.</p> <p>The consensus of the group was that stakeholders wish a level 5 award. This will allow progression into HN awards where the skills will naturally flow from this award, or for students to enter employment.</p>		

<b>1.6</b>	<b>Framework</b>	<p>All group members kindly provided the frameworks for their centre, and gave a background as to how their frameworks had been tweaked to meet the needs of their stakeholders.</p> <p>This allowed for discussions to take place as to what subject areas would feature in the NC Administration award.</p>		
<b>1.7</b>	<b>Content</b>	<p>The group were provided with the list of all Units featured within the Business portfolio, along with the associated research. The group has been delegated with the task of seeking out the Units that will meet the needs of the broad framework listed above. The group is faced with three options, to select Units that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. can be used in their entirety</li> <li>2. that require some changes</li> <li>3. no units available, therefore new units will have to be written</li> </ol> <p>Servicing Units will not be undertaken by Business Education, there is a separate budget for this.</p>	AP: The group to seek units suitable for the NC Business Award and make recommendations	By next meeting
<b>1.8</b>	<b>Unit Writing</b>	<p>It was agreed and confirmed at the meeting that Units and ASPs are to be written by the members of the focus group. If members are unable to participate in the Unit writing then they were to delegate this task to a member of their college staff who would write the Unit under their direction. At the next meeting, confirmation will be required as to who will be participating in the Unit writing and as agreed the Unit writing training will take place in the first week of December.</p>	AP: Decide on the unit/ASP writers for each subject area	By next meeting
<b>1.9</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<p>As per normal practice the group are informed that LTS will be kept abreast of NC developments, to allow LTS to address the provision for support materials. LTS sit on the Key Partners Group and are kept up to</p>		

		<p>date on NQGA developments.</p> <p>The group have been asked to contact between 3 to 4 employers as part of the consultation process and a group of students. Questionnaires to carry out this work will be e-mailed by mid November.</p>		
	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	Monday 11 December 2006		