

**Scottish Qualifications Authority**

**National Qualifications Group Award –National Certificate Business**

**Action Grid — Meeting held on Wednesday 31 January 2007**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Agenda/minute title</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Agreed action and actionee/s</b>	<b>Target date</b>
3.0	<b>Welcome and apologies</b>			
3.1	<b>Purpose of meeting</b>	To confirm that the outline of the framework for the NC Business is an accurate account of previous discussions and agree units to be placed in the framework. Provide unit writers with a unit outline and contracts, and seek ASP writers.		
3.2	<b>Consultation/ questionnaires</b>	<p>The results of the questionnaires were presented. Generally it was agreed that the results were not surprising and the conclusions drawn were as expected and had already been, to some degree, catered for in the construction of the new award.</p> <p>Some comments drawn from each set of questionnaires</p> <p><b>Industry/employer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ comments will shape the core skills requirement and unit content. All writers to be provided with a copy of the questionnaires to allow inclusion within the unit where this is merited</li><li>◆ a lot of common sense requirements highlighted including the needs for reading, writing and oral skills</li></ul>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ a need for communication skills has been catered for with a dedicated core skills unit</li> <li>◆ a need for development of soft skills</li> </ul> <p><b>Past candidates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ generally very positive, although felt that they were not prepared for industry</li> </ul> <p><b>Centre questionnaire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ clear indication there is a myth that a business qualification leads only to two avenues for candidates to take, further education with a business qualification or employment within a business working environment. A clear need to sell this qualification as more than just an NC Business qualification</li> <li>◆ a need for flexibility within the qualification this will allow centres to overcome delivery issues within their centre eg running several classes together; must therefore ensure that the optional section reflects.</li> </ul>		
3.3	<b>Objectives</b>	<p>The group were consulted on some general principles as to the objectives of the new course. These include:</p> <p>This course is considered to be a taster to the world of Business on a basic level. Allowing candidates to experience a vast range of subject areas, offering them the opportunity to decide to continue down the path of further education or employment.</p> <p>Also this course is considered to be a bridge between HN Awards, with particular focus being given to HN Business, but also a gateway to the Accounting and Administration awards With the breadth of the course being across so many subject areas, will eliminate fear for those candidates who wish to undertake further education but are unsure of what to expect; this applies particularly to Economics and Accounts which prove to be stumbling blocks for candidates.</p>		

		<p>Ensure that candidates' basic soft skills have been introduced for further development, laying a foundation for employability skills which will allow candidates to obtain employment and further enhance skills such as communication and customer service.</p> <p>The course offers flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ preparation for employment,</li> <li>◆ optional units allowing the award to cater for individual needs of candidates but with a core that prepares them for the business environment</li> <li>◆ choice for colleges in the delivery of the award</li> <li>◆ Life Skills (within a Business Context)</li> </ul> <p>Destination statistics were requested from the group, this would help facilitate the validation process; also if there was any additional information that was considered to be useful this would be welcomed.</p>		
3.4	<b>Structure of the framework</b>	<p>It was agreed that there is a suitable mix of units within the framework. With the optional section likely to increase over the lifetime of the award, this will increase the flexibility.</p> <p>It was agreed not to continue down the route of a level five award with complimentary level five and six units within the optional section.</p> <p>Discussion evolved around the specific units to be included within the award. Considerable time was given to the inclusion of core ICT units. This was a skill that was placed in high regard by employers and also cuts across the curriculum within acfe. To ensure the long term viability of this NC Business award it was considered fundamental that ICT feature within the core section. After much discussion it was agreed that two level five PC passport units will be included, with the other two be included in the optional section to allow centres the</p>		

		<p>opportunity to deliver the NC business and the PC passport awards in tandem, thus strengthening the structure of the award. A candidate could therefore achieve two awards depending on the selection of the optional units and this will also allow the flexibility to tailor awards to candidate needs, thus preparing them for employment.</p> <p>Taking this avenue will prove popular with employers, they will therefore not have to spend additional time and money putting candidates through PC Passport.</p> <p>The framework, after much discussion, has been agreed as follows</p> <p><b>Core</b>  Recording of Cash Data  PC Passport: Working with IT Software – Word Processing and Presentation  PC Passport: Working with IT Software – Spreadsheet and Database  Communication  Enterprise Activity  Marketing: Basic Principles  Customer Care  Economics</p> <p><b>Optional Units Level 5</b>  Recording of Credit Data  Recording of Data in Ledger  Preparing Final Accounts</p> <p>Presenting and Communicating Information  Information Technology for Administrators  Law  Personal Enterprise Skills  Numeracy  Work Experience</p>		
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		PC Passport (1 of 2) PC Passport (2 of 2)  <b>Optional Units Level 6</b> Financial Accounting Management Accounting Financial Services Microeconomics The UK Economy The International Economy Information Technology for Management Marketing Mix Marketing Research Practice Business Enterprise Business Decision Areas: Marketing and Operations Business Decision Areas: Finance and Human Resource Management External Examination for Higher Business Management Event Organisation Work Experience PC Passport (1 of 5) PC Passport (2 of 5) PC Passport (3 of 5) PC Passport (4 of 5) PC Passport (5 of 5)		
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3.5	<b>Unit outlines</b>	<p>The group undertook the task to write the unit outlines for the core units, thus providing guidance to the unit writers. The unit writers will be provided with the results of the questionnaire consultation and asked to give consideration to areas which can be included within their units naturally without skewing the units.</p> <p>Unit Writers will be contacted and expected to provide draft units including the outcomes, PCs and Assessment methodology. This will ensure that the unit meets the requirement of the course award.</p>		
3.6	<b>ASP</b>	<p>The timescale for the writing of the ASPs was agreed to ensure an overlapping of the unit writing. This will allow for changes to be made to the units and ASPs if necessary prior to sign off. The group was asked if they or colleagues wished to participate in the writing of ASPs, if so to forward these names to SA.</p> <p>It is considered important that some ASPs be ready for the launch to provide centres with some examples of what to expect.</p> <p>SA will organise training for ASP writers.</p> <p>For those units where there are currently existing units consideration will be given to pull forward the timescale for these.</p> <p>The need to include verifiers in the ASP writing process was recognised to ensure that the centres who wish to follow the guidelines set out within the ASPs will be accepted at verification.</p>		
3.7	<b>AOB</b>	No other business was discussed		
3.8	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	<b>Thursday 27 September 2007</b>		