

## English



Welcome to the first edition of our new-look subject update. This complements our regular monthly and weekly communications, with more information relevant to your subject, and details of what we have been working on.

I would encourage you to make regular use of our subject pages, where you will find support documents, answers to **Common Questions**, and links to other areas of interest. Documents that must be treated confidentially can be found on our secure site and you can arrange access to these through your SQA Co-ordinator.

I hope you find the following update helpful, and please contact me if you have any questions.

**Emma Bratchell**  
Qualifications Manager

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## Contacting the team

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## Updates to documents

In the **special edition June 2014 update** on the new National Qualifications, we explained that we would be making updates to documents containing mandatory information on National 3 to National 5 Courses, along with the associated Unit assessment support packs. There have been no changes to mandatory documents for English.

### **National 3 to National 5 – changes to Unit assessment support packs**

Unit assessment support packs have been updated. For English, this includes amendments to National 3, National 4 and National 5.

In some cases extra questions have been added to allow candidates further opportunities to meet the Assessment Standards. Additional clarification has been included on evidence requirements for meeting Assessment Standards in writers' main ideas, purpose, audience and language features in Reading and Listening.

A high-level summary of these updates can be found in the Notification of changes spreadsheet for National 3 to National 5 Languages, via **[www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges)**.

### **New Higher**

All documents containing mandatory information on the new Higher English Course were reviewed and revised in April and May 2014, along with the Higher Unit assessment support packs. Minor changes were made to the Higher English Course Specification, Course Assessment Specification, Unit Specification, Unit Assessment Support, and Course and Unit Support Notes.

A summary of changes can be found in the Notification of changes spreadsheet for Languages, via **[www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges)**.

We have also published comparative documents on the Higher English subject page which illustrate the specific changes made to the Higher Course Specification, Course Assessment Specification, and Unit Specification.

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## Support and guidance

**Finalised Marking Instructions for the 2014 English** question papers are now published on the relevant subject pages of the website. Please note that slight amendments were made to the National 5 English Critical Essay Marking Instruction Grid.

**The Portfolio Marking Instructions** for National 5 English were updated during this year's main diet. This was to assist Markers by providing further clarity to ensure consistency across marking. These Marking Instructions were updated in September 2014 and relevant associated documents will be updated accordingly. These revised Marking Instructions can be found in the General Assessment Information document on the National 5 English subject page, as well as the Course Assessment Task document on SQA's secure website.

**Guidance on performance in external Course assessments** and evidence generated for internal assessment is published annually. This includes Course Reports, External Assessment Reports and Verification Key Messages, all of which will be available in the autumn via the relevant subject pages of SQA's website. Internal Assessment Reports will not be published for the new National Courses.

The following Verification Key Message is now available:

◆ **National 3 to National 5 English**

Please take time to read the above report as it contains useful feedback on candidate performance in 2013–14.

## Looking ahead to 2014–15

We would like to express our gratitude and extend our thanks to all those who have undertaken duties in session 2013–14. We appreciate the work that all the teams carry out and look forward to continuing to work with them during session 2014–15.

### Recruitment opportunities

We are currently in the process of recruiting for a number of vacancies that we are looking to fill between now and February 2015. Vacancies include new and replacement appointments for the following roles in relation to the new qualifications:

- ◆ Higher Senior Team Leaders
- ◆ Higher Team Leaders
- ◆ National 5 Team Leaders
- ◆ National 5 and Higher Markers

For more information, please visit [www.sqa.org.uk/cfeappointeevacancies](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfeappointeevacancies).

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## **Advanced Higher Implementation Events**

Advanced Higher implementation events will take place in locations around Scotland in March 2015. More information will be issued to centres nearer the time.

## **Understanding Standards**

Throughout session 2014–15, we will be publishing a range of Understanding Standards materials for both Unit and Course assessment. These materials will include candidate evidence with commentaries and can be used by centres for training and bench-marking purposes. We will also run Understanding Standards events for Unit assessment, for Nominees to share knowledge of Unit assessment with their colleagues. In addition, we will run Understanding Standards events for Course assessment for National 5, which will be open to all subject specialists.

Further information will follow in SQA's weekly and monthly centre updates.

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