

Engineering Science,
Graphic Communication, Practical Woodworking,
Practical Metalworking, Practical Electronics



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.

Dave Main
Qualifications Manager

General information

Outgoing National Courses

Session 2014-15 is the last year that the existing Access, Intermediate, Higher and Advanced Higher Courses will be available. The final examinations for these Courses will take place in May/June 2015. If you have any candidates undertaking these qualifications over two years, they should have already completed the first year of the Course by now; they should not be starting it.

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.

National 3 to National 5

We have reviewed and updated all of the documents containing mandatory information on the National 3 to National 5 Courses, with a view to adding clarity where it was required. There are no fundamental changes to these documents but we encourage all practitioners to make themselves familiar with the latest versions. A high level summary of these updates can be found in the Notification of changes spreadsheet for National 3 to National 5 Technologies at **www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges**

We have also reviewed the National 5 Course assignment documentation. The Course assignments are unchanged, but where required we have added clarity to the documentation.

New Higher

Documents containing mandatory information on the new Higher were reviewed and revised in April and May 2014, along with the Higher Unit assessment support packs.

A high level summary of the updates to mandatory documents can be found in the Notification of changes spreadsheets at **www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges**

Contacting the team

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Support and guidance

2014 question paper Marking Instructions

Finalised Marking Instructions for the 2014 question papers will be published on the relevant **subject pages** of SQA's website by the end of September 2014.

Reports on assessment performance

We annually publish guidance on performance in externally marked Course assessments and evidence generated from internal assessments. This includes Course Reports, External Assessment Reports and Verification Key Messages Reports; all of which will be available in the autumn via the relevant subject pages of SQA's website at **www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjects**. Please note that Internal Assessment Reports will not be published for the new National Courses.

Please take time to consider each of the above reports as the information that they contain is essential reading.

Engineering Science — use of software in new National Courses

We are sometimes asked if a particular language or piece of software is appropriate for use in Engineering Science Courses. As with the existing NQ Computing and Information Systems Courses, we don't prescribe, recommend or exclude anything; practitioners are free to use whichever software they choose, as long as it meets the requirements of the Course.

Engineering Science — National 4 and National 5 coursework

Practitioners are reminded that, for the National 4 Added Value Unit assessment and the National 5 assignment, candidates are expected to undertake the task themselves and solve the problem independently. As such, in a class group we would expect to see a variety of responses and a range of marks.

Candidates must not be given a 'sample' solution (or similar) before undertaking the task. Should you wish your candidates to practice for the assessment, or to demonstrate an approach, this should be done separately using a task that does not count towards their final grade; eg a task that you have devised yourself.

Practical Woodworking and Practical Metalworking — National 4 and National 5 coursework

While you are free to assess Units as you see fit, when assessing the National 4 Added Value Unit, you must use the Added Value Unit assessment provided by SQA. You must also use the Coursework assessment task provided for the coursework component of the National 5 Course assessment.

We have always advised that alterations to the Added Value assessments and National 5 Course assessments were not permitted; however, we are aware of issues regarding sizes and have worked to resolve this.

We now have a process in place to consider these cases (*please see overleaf*):

Exceptional request to amend sizes in the National 4 Added Value Unit assessment and/or National 5 assignment:

1. Telephone the Qualifications Manager/ Qualifications Officer to make your request.
2. We will send a form for you to complete. This requires your Head of Centre to support your request and its underlying rationale.
3. Return the form, containing your proposed amendments to the assignment.
4. We will forward the form to one of our senior verifiers for consideration.
5. We will then contact you with a decision, which (if we are in agreement) should be retained for subsequent verification visits.

This process should ensure that we are all working to the same assessments and that, where changes are made, they are minor and are driven solely by necessity.

Looking ahead to 2014–15

We would like to express our gratitude and extend our thanks to all those who have undertaken SQA 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.

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.
