**SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY**

**QUALIFICATIONS SUPPORT TEAM FOR HN ACCOUNTING, ADMINISTRATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES**

**ACTION GRID – MEETING 25 HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30 MAY 2018  
  
Present:** 5 x centre reps, 2 x QO, QM

**Speaking to 25/9:** SQA HoS

**Apologies:** 3 x centre reps

| **Ref** | **Agenda/Minute Title** | **Agreed Action** | **Action to be taken by** | **Target Date** |
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| 25/1 | Welcome | QM welcomed everyone to the meeting including the new members  QM summarised the remit of the group as a refresher and for the benefit of the new members. The core remit is to provide practitioner support to the SQA Qualifications Team on the delivery of the Group Awards within the HN Accounting, Administration and IT and Business subjects. |  |  |
| 25/2 | Action Grid from Meeting 24 | No actions were outstanding from Meeting 24. QM thanked the group for meeting the previous actions and their support to the Qualifications Team in delivering the Network Events successfully. |  |  |

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| 25/3 | HN Network Evaluations/Feedback | **HN Accounting**  13 responses from 28 delegates. All respondents rated the speakers as very good/good and that the event had been beneficial to them. Respondents indicated they would implement ideas from GU2 and mentoring sessions.  **HN Administration and IT**  30 responses from 53 delegates. The speakers’ presentations were rated very good by 21 delegates, good by 5 and satisfactory by 4. The Event content was rated very good by 18, good by 7 and satisfactory by 5. Comments illustrate that delegates value the opportunity to hear from and share practice with fellow practitioners, particularly around digital technologies and online assessment. Responses indicated some delegates intended to follow up with colleagues across other centres, for example, via a Facebook Group on use of digital technologies in teaching and assessment.  **HN Business**  14 responses from 30 delegates. The speakers’ presentations were rated very good by 10 delegates, good by 3 and satisfactory by 1. The Event content was rated very good by 10, good by 2, satisfactory by 1 and poor by 1. Again, the comments indicated that the input of fellow practitioners was particularly valuable, especially regarding the writing of assessments and use of digital technologies. |  |  |
| 25/4 | HN Surveys | The surveys close on 29 June 2018.  **HN Accounting**  Number of learner responses lower than previous 2 years. Members of QST asked to encourage their students to respond. Majority of respondents aged 25+, attending on a full-time basis and chose course to find employment and improve career prospects. Little input from learners on choice of optional units.  Number of centre responses same as in previous years. Although little use of e-learning platforms, centres would like more units to be done electronically to reflect professional exams. Individual comments on individual units.  **HN Administration and IT**  Learner responses were very high at 111 which is very positive. There was a very even spread of respondent ages – 28% 17-20, 27% 21-25, 19% 26-34 and 26% 35+. The group felt this to be consistent with their own experience of an increasing number of mature students undertaking the qualifications. It was suggested that the survey could be amended to reflect a range of bands above the age of 35 to gain more insight into age profiles above this range. This will be considered, however future surveys will have to comply with GDPR.  The data suggests that 23% of respondents progressed to the qualification from an NC or other programme rather than with Highers. 52% of respondents gave a reason relating to employment for undertaking the qualification, 32% plan to progress to further study and 15% for interest in the qualification subject.  88% said they would recommend the qualification to others.  25 responses were received from Centres. There was some indication centres would like to see more done with digital technologies throughout the qualifications. There were many individual comments on a range of issues and suggestions.  **HN Business**  51 responses were received from Learners. The age profile was 49% 17-20, 33% 21-25, 16% 26-34 and 2% 35+. Data suggests that 31% of students progressed to the qualification from an NC or other programme. 50% of respondents gave progression to further study as their main reason for undertaking the qualification, with 31% giving a career-related reason and 19% an interest in the subject.  88% of respondents said they would recommend the qualification to others.  19 responses were received from Centres. Again, there was a desire expressed to see more digital content in line with technological developments. Support was also expressed for the assessment approaches within the Enhancements project and a wish to see this expanded further. There were many other individual comments on a range of issues and suggestions. |  |  |
| 25/5 | SQA Statistical Report | QO distributed copies of SQA’s Statistical Reports for years to July 2017 and 2016. Accounting, AIT and Business all continue to feature in the top 20 SQA HNC/Ds by entry figures – the majority within the top 8. There is also high uptake internationally of Financial Services and Business related qualifications.  The Statistical Report is published towards the end of April each year. |  |  |
| 25/6 | Subject Updates | **HN Accounting**  The units and ASPs for Payroll, Income Tax and Business Taxation are being reviewed as a result of changes to income tax introduced by the Scottish Government in April 2018. This will result in minor amendments to the unit specifications and updated assessments. Outcomes 4 and 5 within Business Taxation will be combined.  **NC Accounting**  The revised NC units are going through final checks prior to coding. Although the units will be available, changes to the NC Accounting framework will not be considered until September, with the new frameworks being introduced in session 2019/20.  **Foundation Apprenticeship in Accounting**  Final framework document was published in April 2018 and can be downloaded from SDS’s website - [Foundation Apprenticeship in Accounting](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/43581/fa-framework-accountancy-final.pdf). The framework consists of a NPA in Accounting and a professional qualification in Accounting.  **HN Administration and IT**  SQA’s intention is to develop a further ASP each for Graded Units 2 and 3 for the purposes of re-assessment. Graded Unit 3 is project-based so the opportunity for students to undertake a full re-assessment may be limited but it would still be useful to have an alternative.  Production of a guidance document for delivery of Digital Technologies for Administrators is underway based on the experiences and feedback of two practitioners.  An alternative portfolio-based form of Assessment Support for Digital Technologies for Administrators is also currently being considered.  A query was raised whether use of SOLAR is mandatory for Graded Unit 1. QM confirmed that use of SOLAR has never been a mandatory stipulation, however this is the Assessment Support currently provided by SQA. Centres have the option of developing their own assessment for any HN unit. |  |  |
|  |  | **HN Business**  A plan is in place to update the combined ASP for IT in Business: Spreadsheets and IT Applications Software 1. Work will commence on this soon.  QO advised that there is an intention to scope the product surround for HNC/D Business to identify any opportunities to help align delivery with current technological and other developments through, for example, new/amended ASPs, amended guidance within the unit specification, Understanding Standards etc.  QO advised that the HN Marketing Qualifications Team have recently updated guidance in unit specifications on the use of digital technologies throughout the HN Marketing Group Awards, including the unit Marketing: An Introduction. QO advised he would check whether any ASPs or other Product Surround have been updated that could be made available for HN Business. | QO | 15 June |
| 25/7 | HN Unit and ASP Comments | **Using Financial Accounting Software**  A query relating to ‘backup’ and ‘restore’ when using a Sage cloud-based accounting package had been received. Accounting representatives to advise QO on this query.  **Recording Financial Transactions**  A suggestion to increase the Error Tolerance for Outcomes 1 and 3 was recently received by SQA. Due to short notice and lack of available time it was decided to follow this up by email and come to a decision in due course. | Accounting reps  QO/Accounting reps | 15 June  15 June |

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| 25/8 | HN Units – Research Skills and Behavioural Skills for Business – Feedback | These units are under revision by the respective Qualification Teams for HN Social Sciences and HN Management.  **Research Skills**  Written comments were submitted for the attention of the relevant team. QM requested that any further comments be sent to QM or QO by 8th June.  **Behavioural Skills for Business**  The deadline for comments on the final draft of this revised unit specification was 30th May. It was confirmed that some comments have been submitted by email to the relevant team. | All | 8 June |
| 25/9 | HN Next Gen | SQA HoS gave a presentation on the HN Next Generation project. The project will evaluate all aspects of the HN Product, in consultation with all stakeholders, with the aim of revamping it for the present and future needs of society.  This is a long-term project in its very early stages. There was some discussion of high-level issues following the presentation. |  |  |
| 25/10 | Any Other Business | A query was raised as to whether the Route 2 pathway for HN Accounting is still available for students transitioning from the old HNC to the current HND. QO confirmed that this is still in place.  QO confirmed that the same pathway is available for HN Business but that there is no Route 2 within the revised HN Administration and IT. This is because like-for-like credit transfer can be given towards all the new units within the revised HN Administration and IT, with the exception of Digital Technologies for Administrators. For this reason, Office Technologies appears in the new frameworks to allow students to carry forward credit for this unit in a similar way to credit transfer.  It was therefore decided there was no value in including a Route 2. |  |  |
| 25/11 | Date of Next Meeting | A provisional date of Wednesday 31 October 2018 was agreed for Meeting 26 of the QST. |  |  |