SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

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

ACTION GRID – MEETING 26 HELD ON WEDNESDAY 31 OCTOBER 2018

Present: 7 centre representatives (CR); 1 Qualifications Manager (QM), 1 Qualifications Officer (QO)

Apologies: No apologies

Ref	Agenda/Minute Title	Agreed Action	Action to be taken by	Target Date
26/1	Welcome	QM welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced CR as a new member to the QST representing Business. QM informed the meeting that he was taking over the Qualifications Manager role from Sharon McDowall who was now concentrating on SQA's international work. Two Administration and Information Technology practitioners have been approached to join the QST to ensure equal representation across the subject areas.		
26/2	Action Grid	Updated unit specifications and ASPs are available for the HN Accounting units Payroll (H4J9 34), Income Tax (F86X 35) and Business Taxation (J0LY 35). These incorporate the new income tax rates set by Scottish Government. QM advised the meeting that updated guidance on the use of digital technologies had been incorporated into the Marketing: An Introduction (F7BX 34) Unit. There are two ASPs – one uses a case study where one of the questions has been updated to include digital technology. The other is		

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		generic and requires the learner to investigate an organisation or scenario of their own choice. Using Financial Accounting Software (F7JP 34) – it was agreed that backups could be stored within secure cloud areas or on pen/home drives. Recording Financial Transactions (HH81 33) – the increase in error tolerances had been actioned with the unit specification and ASP updated. Research Skills (F60A 34) revised unit to be validated by the end of 2018. CR enquired if the changes would still allow the assessment of Research Skills and Business: Graded Unit 2 to be integrated. QO to advise QST when revised unit specification is available. Behavioural Skills for Business – revised unit now available but currently no ASP – new unit code is J1BW 35. The predecessor unit – F84L 35 – will finish on 31 July 2021.	QO	January 2019
26/3	HN Surveys	**HN Accounting** – lower candidate and centre responses compared to previous years. Centre responses requested some e-assessment to reflect professional exams. Suggested topics for Network Event included marking of reports; GU2 – methods of delivery; and wider use of spreadsheets. Comments included more use of reference and reporting writing in GU2; more on service sector costings; and making some units 2 credit units. Candidate responses indicated that most were full time students with roughly half indicating they hoped to go to university and the remainder to find employment. Majority find GU2 difficult. One off comments relating to options offered by centre. **HN Administration and IT** – good response from candidates and centres. Centre responses suggested discussion on delivery of new units; and		

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		Digital Technologies for Administrators as topics for the Network Event. Mainly positive comments. Majority of candidates full-time. Candidate comments were wide, varied and mainly concerned with teaching and assessment. **HN Business** – good response. Centres indicated that some content was out of date and that there should be more digital content. Preparing Financial Forecasts (F84R 35) difficult to deliver within a single credit time allocation. CR suggested that the Investment Appraisal aspect could be integrated with Information and Communication Technology in Business (F84K 35) (decision making). Graded Unit marking was suggested as a Network workshop topic. Candidates mainly full-time with most hoping to progress to further study, although 20% indicated they have changed their plans since starting the qualification. 35% of candidates did not feel that Statistics for Business was beneficial to them. The QST members questioned the appropriateness of the mathematics content in Statistics for Business as many of the calculations can be done using software and there was a suggestion that more emphasis should be placed on the interpretation and analysis of the data in its application to a business context. This is something that can be considered as part of the consultation on HNC/D Business.		
26/4	Graded Unit Statistics	Statistics on the grades within the Graded Units across Accounting, Business and Administration and IT were distributed and discussed. There continues to be a good spread of results across most of the units and the proportion of grades are consistent year on year (+/- 5%). It was noted that this was the first year of the 2017 Administration and Information Technology: Graded Unit 1.		

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		Details of the Financial Services Graded Units was also distributed.		
26/5	Subject Update	All representatives acknowledged they had received the SQA communication about Conditions of Assessment for Graded Units. This referred to Reasonable Assistance, Remediation and Re-assessment.		
		HN Accounting – Word versions of the ASPs for Business Taxation and Graded Unit 3 are now available to download from the secure website to enable centres to update as required.		
		QO distributed information relating to the Foundation Apprenticeships in Accounting and Business Skills. The frameworks belong to Skills Development Scotland (SDS) but SQA will certificate candidates. The NPAs within the frameworks fall within the NC Qualifications Manager's remit.		
		QO informed of SDS's Graduate Apprenticeships – Business Management with a Financial Services route; Accounting currently in draft format. Link to information to be sent to group.	QO	20 November
		HN Administration and Information Technology – 2 units added to options – Social Media (HT9W 34) and Social Media for Business (HT9P 35). QM will investigate available of ASPs for these units. There is a combined ASP for Presentation Skills and ICT. An ASP for Digital Technologies for Administrators is being developed and should be available by the end of the year.	QM	20 November
		CR raised the issue of SOLAR being off-line for 10 days in December. It was agreed that evidence for Outcome 3 could be uploaded to centre server and then to SOLAR went it was back on-line.		

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		HN Business – Social Media units have also been added to options within frameworks. QM informed the meeting that a scoping exercise had been carried out – surveys closed on 31 October. Consultant and QM will take time to reflect on feedback and further discussion will take place at Network Event. Further consultation is likely both at the event and perhaps a second, more focused survey.		
26/6	HN Next Gen	QO informed the meeting that decisions regarding next steps and pilot centres was due to take place week commencing 5 November 2018.		
26/7	2019 HN Networks – Ideas for Workshops	Much discussion took place around topics for workshop session at the Network Events. **HN Accounting** ♦ marking exercises for reports ♦ GU3 marking – ASPs have full marks but causes problems when a few items are included within marks. **HN Business** ♦ marking exercises for GU1 ♦ professional judgement in GU2 ♦ incorporating digital content within existing units **HN Administration and Information Technology** ♦ How GU1 is marked in SOLAR – feedback from a practitioner who marked in 2018 ♦ DTFA – discussion on new ASP and sharing experiences of delivering this unit ♦ GU3 – marking examples and best practice.		

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		The QST agreed that a Question Time session for each of the subject areas would be useful but recognised the logistical difficulty of getting questions in on time and that – if this were to be possible – the format would be a two-way discussion rather than putting questions to an EV for a definitive answer. It may not be possible to answer all questions on the day.		
26/8	Any Other Business	CR suggested that it would be useful to get alerts when new content was uploaded to UShare. The use of spreadsheets in accounting units was discussed and how arithmetic errors could be recognised.		
26/9	Date of Next Meeting	The date was agreed provisionally as 29 May 2019.		