CODE OF PRACTICE GOVERNANCE GROUP – 25 MARCH 2020

NATIONAL 5 COURSEWORK

As a reminder, the current status of March National 5 coursework received as at 24 March is as follows:

March Coursework

	Expected	Received	Agreed Extension	Outstanding
Candidates	125,962	119,240	4,200	2522

PLEASE NOTE: Further coursework for Nat 5 was due on 23 April but the decision has been taken that further uplifts will not proceed.

The materials due on 23 April included:

National 5 Coursework - Uplift 23/04	Entries	Candidates Ext	No of Centres
Art and Design	10,284	50	4
Care	539	0	0
Design and Manufacture	4,780	24	3
Fashion and Textile Technology	432	0	0
Practical Cake Craft	1,356	0	0
Practical Cookery	5,694	0	0
Music	7,865	45	2
Physical Education	17,538	127	4

This means that between March and April uplifts, SQA is expecting 174k coursework entries at Nat 5, and as 24 March, 55k is oustanding.

Dependencies for marking National 5 coursework:

- Markers remain willing to mark National 5. This includes sufficient resource and reserves to fill vacancies up to the day of marker training
- Higher and Advanced Higher markers willing to assist with marking for Nat 5

- The wider system supports SQA in marking and quality assuring scripts and understands that we are acting in the interests of learners.
- We develop a communications plan to advise markers of next steps should they be unable to continue mark
- We have an agreed set of tools to standardise marking of the coursework before the start of marking.
- Key SQA staff are able to support the marking process
- SQA's building remains open to send and receive materials
- Courier service is not impacted by the virus
- Emarking and their sub-contracted supplier is not impacted by the virus
- Ports and airports remain open for delivery and return of scripts

Description of the current procedure for handling coursework materials

It might be helpful to set out the current processes for receiving and handling materials from centres and markers, including reallocation should markers be unable to complete their allocated materials.

Turnaround procedure for Coursework

Instructions and stationery are provided to centres on how to package and label the materials. On a given day, SQA's appointed carrier uplifts materials from centres. Materials can go to 2 different addresses - scan house for (marking from image) MFI components and SQA for the remaining coursework.

For MFI components, on the day after uplift materials are delivered to the scan house. We are currently scanning materials sent to the scanning house, but will not proceed to mark until decision has been taken to proceed with National 5 Coursework.

For Non MFI components (paper), on the day after uplift, SQA takes receipt of delivery, scans all materials to log receipt and begins to allocate packets to specific markers on subject/component/level basis.

SQA collates allocation into a consignment for delivery to the marker. This consignment also contains materials for markers to return the marked materials.

Consignment is uplifted from SQA to be delivered to a given address. This must be signed for to ensure track and trace. Markers can supply an alternative delivery address as many usually not home at point of delivery which takes place mainly during the day.

Upon completion of the quality assurance process (standardisation) to ensure markers mark to standard, marking can commence.

Upon completing the marking of their allocated materials, markers return materials to Post Office/Delivery Office labelled for SQA. Packages are signed for to ensure track and trace. Our courier service delivers marked materials to Lowden and SQA scans/records receipt and progresses to next stage. The marks for paper-based materials (Marking from Paper MFP) should already be in the system and packets are racked for storage/subsequent QA procedures. If traditionally marked (no MFI or MFP eg Art&Design), SQA staff are required to direct data input (DDI) the marks into our system.

Reallocation procedure for coursework

Where a marker is unable to mark and SQA are advised in advance of issue of materials, our normal process would be to split their allocation of markers and assign to other markers.

Where a marker has taken receipt of materials and cannot start/and or complete their allocation, the markers contacts SQA and makes arrangements for the return of materials to SQA. The marker takes the materials to the post office or despatch office. SQA will record receipt of the materials and reassign to an available alternative marker available and re-issue using track and trace.

We will endeavour to run the current process as best we can, noting that there may decisions ahead which impact on our capacity to complete all marking:

- In the event we invoke reallocation of materials to another marker, we increase our dependency on having a sufficient number of markers to mark
- Reallocation requires the courier service to support this routine remedial action to enable re-routing materials for marking. We been advised that our courier service is invoking procedures to prioritise medical supplies
- SQA staff remain fit and willing to undertake these tasks, noting that we will call on other staff able to help in Lowden. It would help if staff could be assigned key worker status.
- If markers become unwell, we will face a number of challenges to retrieving scripts – possibly contaminated – with markers unable to return via the Post Office.

Recommendation

Setting aside the significant logistical challenges and risks which COVID – 19 may present, we will attempt to mark whatever volume of materials we can to support decision of the alternative awarding model. If materials remain unmarked, we will retain/attempt to recover and could review or mark unmarked coursework at appeals stage.