Route map through learning, teaching and assessment

Course: Administration and IT   Level: Higher

This route map is intended to assist staff in planning and delivering the overall vision for Curriculum for Excellence. It has been developed to signpost the relevant support materials available to assist staff in the planning of learning, teaching and assessment of Higher Administration and IT.

The vision for the new qualifications is to create assessment opportunities that follow and support learning and teaching. This follows the principles laid out in *Building the Curriculum 5* and makes assessment a natural part of learning and teaching.

Education Scotland has published support materials to help staff develop programmes of learning drawn from three sources: course materials commissioned by Education Scotland, other support materials produced by staff seconded to Education Scotland and course materials provided by staff through their education authorities. Further materials will be added as they become available.

These support materials are not intended to constrain staff, hence are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. They provide suggestions on approaches to learning and teaching that will promote development of the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills for Higher Administration and IT. Staff are encouraged to draw on these materials, and existing materials, to develop their own programmes of learning which are appropriate to the needs of learners within their own context.

The link to Education Scotland's support materials can be found below together with a number of other subject-specific links staff may find helpful as they develop **programmes of learning** for Higher Administration and IT. These links are followed by a sequential list of the key guidelines, advice and support for the Higher Administration and IT **qualification**. This information is intended to support staff in deciding the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and assess learners.

Useful links for learning and teaching Higher Administration and IT

Education Scotland NQ Course Materials site accessed via Glow (login and password required)
A wide range of learning and teaching resources to help staff develop programmes of learning.
http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/nqcoursematerials/subjects/Administration/index.asp
(copy and paste this link into your browser)

SQA course and unit support notes providing advice and guidance on learning and teaching
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseUnitSupportNotes_Higher_SocialStudies_AdministrationandIT.pdf
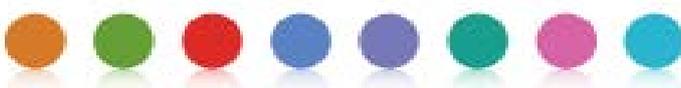
National Assessment Resource site via Glow (login and password required)
Materials that inform planning for learning, teaching, moderation and assessment.
https://www.narscotland.org.uk/

Key Curriculum for Excellence support
A quick guide to finding vital information about Curriculum for Excellence under the following headings:
- the latest guidance, updates and plans for embedding Curriculum for Excellence
- information on assessment
- information on the new qualifications.
http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/keycfesupport/index.asp

Higher Administration and IT course content

The main SQA administration and IT page is found at http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45686.html. Pages specifically relating to Higher are at http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47918.html. Staff should also regularly check the updates and announcements section of this page.

The course specification can be found at
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseSpecification_Higher_SocialStudies_AdministrationandIT.pdf

Staff may also find a course comparison of help as this details points of change and areas of stability across National 5 and the new Higher.
http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/H_Administration_and_IT_Course_comparison.pdf

There are three units: Administration Theory and Practice, IT Solutions for Administrators and Communication in Administration.

Administrative Theory and Practice: In-depth knowledge and understanding of administration in, and the impact of IT on, the workplace; factors contributing to the effectiveness of the administrative function, such as effective time and task management, complying with workplace legislation, effective teams and customer care.

IT Solutions for Administrators: Develop advanced skills in IT organising and managing information in administration-related contexts; use a range of functions of IT applications covering word processing, spreadsheets, databases, or emerging equivalent technologies; use of these to analyse, process and manage information in order to create and edit relatively complex business documents.

Communication in Administration: Develop a range of advanced IT skills for research and communicating complex information to others; develop an understanding of barriers to communication and ways of overcoming them to ensure communication is understood; security and confidentiality of information.

More detail on course coverage can be found in the course support notes.
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseUnitSupportNotes_Higher_SocialStudies_AdministrationandIT.pdf

Further mandatory information on course coverage is found on page 8 of the course assessment specification.
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseAssessSpec_N5_SocialStudies_AdministrationandIT.pdf

Unit assessment

Units are mandatory when taken as part of the Higher Administration and IT course but they can be taken independently. Unit support notes follow on from the course support notes.
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseUnitSupportNotes_Higher_SocialStudies_AdministrationandIT.pdf

Each unit specification gives details of the outcomes and assessment standards.

Administrative Theory and Practice
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_H_AdministrationandIT_AdministrativeTheoryandPractice.pdf

IT Solutions for Administrators
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_H_AdministrationandIT_ITSolutionsforAdministrators.pdf

Communication in Administration
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_H_AdministrationandIT_CommunicationinAdministration.pdf

Learners must meet all the outcomes and assessment standards with evidence generated through learning and teaching. Assessment evidence can be drawn from a variety of activities and presented in a variety of formats. Learners should have access to resources to complete the assessment task and no time restrictions should be imposed. Staff should use their professional judgment when looking at the assessment evidence and ensure that minimum competency is met. Details of minimum competency can be found in the unit assessment support packs in Column 3 of the Judging Evidence table entitled making assessment judgements. Staff should undertake internal verification regularly.

Three different ways of gathering evidence have been suggested by the SQA: a unit-by-unit approach, a combined approach and a portfolio approach. Initially, the more traditional unit-by-unit approach may be more prevalent as staff familiarise themselves with outcomes and assessment standards. However, it is likely that there will be a move towards a combined and/or portfolio approach as the confidence of staff grows, thus reducing the burden of assessment. Assessment in Higher Administration and IT lends itself to a more combined approach. Unit assessment support is available on the SQA Secure website.

Course assessment

The purpose of the course assessment is to assess added value as well as confirming attainment in the course and providing a grade. In this course assessment, added value will focus on:
- challenge – requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- application – requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate.

The course assessment comprises two components: a question paper and an assignment. The course will be graded A–D.
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseAssessSpec_Higher_SocialStudies_AdministrationandIT.pdf

Component 1 – Assignment
The assignment will assess learners' ability to apply their problem solving and advanced IT skills in the context of a complex scenario.

It will be carried out in TWO stages;

1. Planning, including contingency planning
2. Follow-up tasks

Tasks will ensure that relatively even emphasis is placed on different IT applications across the two stages.

70 marks are available for the assignment, which will be set by the SQA on an annual basis. The assignment should be conducted under a high degree of supervision and control in a single two-hour time period. It should be submitted to the SQA for external marking before the given due date.

Component 2 – Question paper

The purpose of the question paper is to address breadth and application. Breadth will be assessed by drawing on, and by sampling, the knowledge and understanding from across the course. Learners will also be required to apply their knowledge and understanding of administrative theory.

There are two parts to the question paper.

1. Section 1 – 10 marks. A set of mandatory questions based on a stimulus drawn from any aspect of the course.
2. Section 2 – 20 marks. Mandatory questions.

Questions from each section will be sampled from the course, ensuring there is balanced coverage across the course.

A total of 30 marks are available for the question paper, which will be set and marked by the SQA. It will be carried out under controlled conditions within an hour.

A specimen question paper and marking scheme can be found at
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/AdministrationandITSQPH.pdf

The following document contains general assessment information to help prepare learners for the assignment component of the Higher Administration and IT course assessment. It must be read in conjunction with the specific assessment tasks for this component of course assessment.
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/GAInfoHigherAdministrationandIT.pdf

Verification

The verification process is designed to be supportive and not onerous. Internal verification is the process of ensuring standards are applied uniformly and consistently within a school, in line with national standards. External verification is the process of ensuring that national standards are maintained consistently across all schools and is carried out by SQA. Information on quality assurance can be found at http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58448.html.

Prior verification

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/Prior%20Verification%20Centre%20Guidance%20FINAL.pdf

Staff who devise their own assessments can send them to SQA for prior verification, free of charge. This is only necessary where significant changes have been made to the unit assessment provided. It gives departments confidence that their proposed assessment is fit for purpose and meets national standards.

Internal verification

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/InternalVerificationGuideforSQAcentres.pdf

As a matter of course staff should be internally verifying their assessments by carrying out the types of activities they have used previously, for example a sample of learners' work should be marked by more than one staff member in a department, and in single-person departments an arrangement should be made with another local authority school.

External verification

www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/66847.html

SQA intend that every school will be verified over the first few years. Verification will take place in November, February and May.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Evidence_required_for_verificationevents.pdf

Schools must retain the evidence until 31 July of each academic year.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/SQA_Evidence_retention_requirements_A3_table.pdf

Key messages from verification will be put up on the SQA website.

Results services

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/FA6669_SQA_Results_Services_A5_8pp_brochure_web.pdf
http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/65427.html

SQA offer two services to replace the appeals service:

- Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (details to be provided to SQA within ten days of the learner sitting the external assessment)
- Post-results Service – this consists of a clerical check and/or a marking review if the centre has concerns about the results of an individual or group.