Course Support Notes

SQA

National 4 Administration and IT Course Support Notes

Contents

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the National 4 Administration and IT Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units. They should be read in conjunction with the *Course Specification*, the *Added Value Unit Specification*, and the Unit Specifications for the Units in the Course.

General guidance on the Course

Aims

The key purpose of this Course is to develop learners' administrative and IT skills and to enable them to contribute to the effective functioning of organisations.

The Course aims to enable learners to:

♦ develop an understanding of administration in the workplace and legislation affecting employees
♦ develop knowledge of customer care
♦ develop straightforward digital literacy skills and use them to perform administrative tasks
♦ acquire skills to organise and support events

Progression into this Course

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following, or by equivalent qualifications or experience:

♦ Administration and IT (National 3) Course or relevant component Units
♦ Literacy (National 3) Unit
♦ Numeracy (National 3) Unit

Experiences and outcomes

National Courses have been designed to draw on and build on the curriculum experiences and outcomes as appropriate. Qualifications developed for the senior phase of secondary education are benchmarked against SCQF levels. SCQF level 4 and the curriculum level 4 are broadly equivalent in terms of level of demand, although qualifications at SCQF level 4 will be more specific to allow for more specialist study of subjects.

Learners who have completed Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes will find these an appropriate basis for doing the Course.

In this Course, the experiences and outcomes from the Technologies curriculum area, which are listed below, will be particularly relevant.

Key concept	Experiences and outcomes — fourth curriculum level
Digital Literacy Using digital products and services in a variety of contexts to achieve a purposeful outcome	I can select and use digital technologies to access, select relevant information and solve real world problems. **TCH 4-01a** I can use digital technologies to process and manage information responsibly and can reference sources accordingly. **TCH 4-02a** I can explore the impact of cyber-crime for business and industry and the consequences this can have on me. **TCH 4-03a**
Technological Developments in Society and Business Impact, contribution, and relationship of technologies on business, the economy, politics, and the environment	I can present conclusions about the impact of technologies on the economy, politics and the environment. **TCH 4-07a** I can select and use appropriate hardware and software which supports evolving business activities. **TCH 4-08a**

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Course

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the Course.

Note: teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Added Value Unit Specification* for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course.

This Course contains a significant practical component underpinned by related knowledge and understanding. Its key purpose is to develop learners' straightforward digital literacy skills.

Learners should be given the opportunity to develop IT skills using functions of commonly used digital applications.

Most administrative tasks are based on supporting events, which can vary from a meeting between two or more people to much larger scenarios, and this will be made more meaningful for learners if they are given opportunities to practise organising and supporting real events.

Accuracy and time management are key aspects of an administrator's work, and learners should be encouraged to develop these skills throughout the Course.

Mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding	Administrative Practices	IT Solutions for Administrators	Communication in Administration
Tasks/duties and skills/qualities required of administrators	✔		
Straightforward skills in using the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and presentations		✔	✔
Skills in organising and supporting events	✔	✔	✔
Straightforward skills in using technology, including the internet, for electronic communication and investigation			✔
Straightforward skills in organising, processing and communicating information		✔	✔
Knowledge and understanding of legislation affecting employees in the workplace	✔		
Knowledge and understanding of the features and benefits of good customer care	✔		

In general, the skills listed in this section will support the development of aspects of listening and talking, numeracy, namely information handling, as well as employability and thinking skills. A fuller explanation of how these skills relate to the development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given further on in these *Course Support Notes*.

Progression from this Course

This Course or its components may provide progression to:

♦ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
♦ further study, employment or training

Hierarchies

Hierarchy is the term used to describe Courses and Units which form a structured sequence involving two or more SCQF levels.

In Administration and IT the Courses and Units are offered from SCQF level 3 to SCQF level 6.

It is important that any content in a Course and/or Unit at one particular SCQF level is not repeated if a learner progresses to the next level of the hierarchy. The skills and knowledge should be able to be applied to new content and contexts to enrich the learning experience. This is for centres to manage.

This may be achieved through the planned use of appropriately differentiated activities and contexts within Units. The level of learner support would also be a useful factor in ensuring progression rather than repetition.

Learners will be expected to demonstrate a greater degree of autonomy with less support offered by the teacher/lecturer the higher they progress through the hierarchy. This should increase the sense of ownership the learners have over their work and ensure that, even if they have previously completed the Course at a lower level, their interest in the subject is kept alive.

To the learners who might exceed the SCQF level they are working at, a hierarchical arrangement gives the opportunity to have their best achievements recognised. For those who might fall short in some areas, on the other hand, it provides fall-back. A hierarchical arrangement also enables learners to work at different levels in one class, and it is envisaged that this will happen in some centres.

Approaches to learning and teaching

Learning and teaching approaches should be learner-centred, participative and practical in nature. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning, with an activity-based approach being used to enable learners to develop all the relevant skills effectively. The underpinning knowledge should be combined with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities.

In general, teaching strategies should allow learners to:

♦ work co-operatively and collaboratively and assume shared responsibility
♦ operate within an administrative context
♦ prioritise tasks and work within deadlines
♦ acquire, extend and apply administration-related knowledge, understanding and skills
♦ create, edit and present business documents to an appropriate standard
♦ be involved in self and peer assessment

Centres are free to sequence the teaching of the Outcomes, Units and/or Course in any order they wish. For example, Units may be taught in sequence or be fully combined. A combined approach is recommended, as it will enable learners to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in a meaningful way. Such an approach also helps learners to transfer any newly developed skills to new contexts.

Combined approach to delivery

To make the Course engaging, teachers and lecturers could also use, and encourage learners to use, a wide variety of resources, such as internet clips, TV programmes, photographs, business leaflets, books, or trade journals. Use could also be made of contacts with industry partners and visits to local businesses.

ICT can be a very useful tool in supporting learning and teaching and should be used in innovative and creative ways. Teachers and lecturers could, for example, encourage web-based research and get learners to present their research findings using presentation applications.

Teachers and lecturers should appreciate that this subject is constantly changing, which is why it is important to keep abreast of developments and up to date with evolving practices.

Learning about Scotland and Scottish culture will enrich the learners' learning experience and help them to develop the skills for learning, life and work they will need to prepare them for taking their place in a diverse, inclusive and participative Scotland and beyond. Where there are opportunities to contextualise approaches to learning and teaching to Scottish contexts, teachers and lecturers should consider this.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

The generic skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work which this Course develops include aspects of literacy, numeracy, employability and thinking skills. It will be important for teachers and lecturers to offer learners ample opportunity to develop these skills as an integral part of their learning experience because this will highlight those skills' relevance.

The coverage of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is illustrated in the table below.

Skill	How it is developed
Literacy	♦ listening to and following instructions ♦ participating in group discussions ♦ asking and answering questions ♦ making presentations ♦ interviewing administration personnel in the centre ♦ collaborating with others when organising and supporting events ♦ listening to guest speakers ♦ carrying out mystery shopping
Numeracy	♦ extracting information from graphical formats in a variety of media ♦ understanding and interpreting research data, for example tables, charts, graphs, and written information ♦ using information and data from the internet and intranet to produce simple documents and presentations
Employability, enterprise and citizenship	♦ researching duties, skills and qualities of administrators ♦ working with others ♦ maintaining appropriate personal appearance and dressing appropriately ♦ being punctual and managing time ♦ showing flexibility, resilience, initiative, and responsibility ♦ using a range of digital applications for research and accurate presentation of information ♦ using a range of digital media ♦ using ICT responsibly and safely ♦ planning tasks ♦ finding and evaluating information from the internet and intranet

Skill	How it is developed
Thinking skills	♦ memorising and recalling administration-related facts
	♦ recognising administration related information which has been previously examined
	♦ locating the source of information and data previously examined
	♦ understanding and explaining the role of administration in the workplace
	♦ understanding and explaining the importance of observing health and safety and security of people, property and information
	♦ understanding and explaining the functions of spreadsheets, databases word processing and presentation digital applications
	♦ using knowledge of health, safety and security by applying it in different contexts
	♦ understanding and describing the key features of good customer care

The *Added Value Unit* will consolidate the generic skills of listening and talking, information handling, ICT, employability and thinking skills.

The development of both administration and IT-specific and generic skills will be central to this Course, and teachers and lecturers should make learners aware of the skills they are developing and of the transferability of the generic ones. It is the transferability that will help learners with further study and enhance their personal effectiveness and employability in a range of sectors.

Approaches to assessment

There are different approaches to assessment, and assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, as well as understanding of their learners and their varying needs, to determine the most appropriate ones and, where necessary, to consider workable alternatives.

Assessments must be fit for purpose and should allow for consistent judgements to be made by all assessors. They should also be conducted in a supervised manner to ensure that the evidence provided is valid and reliable. Teachers and lecturers must only assess skills for IT assessment standards — knowledge (oral) assessment is only valid for the theory assessment standards.

Assessments must ensure that the evidence generated demonstrates, at least, the minimum level of competence for each Unit. Assessors preparing assessment methods should be clear about what that evidence will look like for their centre or learner. Examples of suitable forms of evidence could include:

♦ short written responses
♦ participation in group working (making use of logbooks and question and answer sessions to ensure individual learners have met all the Assessment Standards)
♦ presenting information to other groups
♦ various forms of e-assessment, such as e-portfolios
♦ print-outs of completed tasks
♦ written responses to a question paper
♦ digital evidence

The structure of the assessment used by a centre can vary. For example, an assessment could:

♦ assess each individual Assessment Standard of an Outcome as it is delivered
♦ holistically assess one complete Outcome
♦ holistically assess all of the Outcomes of one (or more) Units

Teachers and lecturers should note that learners' day-to-day work may produce evidence which satisfies assessment requirements of a Unit, or Units, either in full or partially. Such naturally occurring evidence may be used as a contribution towards Unit assessment.

Added value

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of added value. At National 4 the added value will be assessed in the Added Value Unit. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment.

Information given in the *Course Specification* and the *Added Value Unit Specification* about the assessment of added value is mandatory.

The added value assessment amounts to more than the sum of Unit assessments, and teachers and lecturers should prepare their learners for the demands it imposes. They should use much of the time allocated to the Added Value Unit for consolidating and integrating the material covered in the other three Units, revising the work done over the entire programme and offering learners any necessary additional support. Since skills in particular take a long time to develop, teachers and lecturers should give learners plenty of opportunities to practise their administrative skills.

Combining assessment across Units

Centres are free to deliver and assess Units and Outcomes in any order they wish. This provides an opportunity for flexibility in sequencing the delivery of the Course and/or Units.

Where possible, using a combined approach to assessment is recommended because it will:

♦ enrich the assessment process for both learners, and teachers and lecturers by bringing together elements of different Units
♦ make more sense to learners and avoid duplication of assessment
♦ ensure greater rigour in assessment
♦ allow for evidence for all Units to be drawn from a range of activities, making it easier to cover aspects which may not occur in a one-off assessment
♦ use assessment opportunities efficiently and reduce over-assessment

Combined assessment will also minimise repetition, allow more time for learning and enable centres to manage the assessment process more efficiently.

The Course offers many opportunities for combining assessment across Units, and teachers and lecturers should use them whenever appropriate.

When assessment across the Units is combined, teachers and lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each Unit to ensure that learners who do not achieve the entire Course may still get the credit for the Unit(s) they have achieved.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these Course Support Notes is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA's assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs, when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on Assessment Arrangements on SQA's website.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

- [Assessment arrangements](#)
- [Building the Curriculum 3–5](#)
- [Guide to Assessment](#)
- [Recent SQA research](#)
- [Remote assessment](#)
- [SCQF Handbook](#)
- [SCQF level descriptors tool](#)
- [SQA's Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)

Administrative information

Published: August 2024 (version 2.0)

History of changes to Course Support Notes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Minor amendments to wording in the 'Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Course' section.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015
2.0	Clarified the 'General guidance on the Course' section. Amended the description of the Units in the 'Approaches to assessment' section to be more specific. Removed reference to desktop publishing throughout. Some changes made to the format to improve accessibility.	Qualifications Manager	August 2024

Unit Support Notes — Administrative Practices (National 4)

Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Administrative Practices (National 4) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- the *Unit Specification*
- the *Course Specification*
- the *Added Value Unit Specification*
- the *Course Support Notes*
- appropriate assessment support materials

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to give learners an appreciation of administration in the workplace and to enable them to carry out a range of straightforward administrative tasks in the context of organising and supporting events.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

♦ Provide an overview of administration in the workplace
♦ Use digital technologies to organise events

Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following or by equivalent qualifications or experience:

♦ National 3 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
♦ Literacy (National 3) Unit
♦ Numeracy (National 3) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the Administration and IT (National 4) *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit or its components may provide progression to:

♦ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
♦ further study, employment or training

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

Learning and teaching approaches should be learner-centred, participative and practical in nature. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning. The underpinning knowledge should be combined with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities.

The following table suggests some activities which could support the delivery of this Unit and which may suit the needs of learners with different learning styles.

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Outlining the tasks/duties and/or skills/qualities of an administrative assistant	Tasks/duties of an Administrative Assistant: ♦ creating and updating spreadsheets, databases, presentations, and word processing documents ♦ booking meeting rooms and venues ♦ organising travel and accommodation arrangements ♦ organising and storing files in the correct order Skills/qualities of an Administrative Assistant: ♦ organised ♦ good communicator ♦ co-operative ♦ willing to learn or develop ♦ ability to multitask ♦ ability to follow instructions ♦ good IT skills ♦ patient ♦ tactful and discreet ♦ approachable	♦ using the internet and newspapers to find job descriptions and person specifications ♦ creating a simple job advert, job description or person specification for an Administrative Assistant position ♦ interviewing administrative personnel within the centre ♦ inviting guest speakers who recruit, or work as, Administrative Assistants ♦ conducting mock interviews for administrative posts ♦ simulating the administrative workplace in the class and having an external administration expert assess learners' skills and qualities as they perform tasks ♦ visiting administrative departments in or outwith the centre ♦ watching clips and films illustrating good qualities and bad qualities of Administrative Assistants ♦ completing theory questions naming the duties and skills/qualities of Administrative Assistants

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Outlining features of good customer care	Features of good customer care: ♦ using customer feedback forms ♦ providing staff with a customer care policy statement ♦ ensuring staff know the products and services offered to customers ♦ ensuring customer queries and problems are dealt with quickly and politely ♦ monitoring staff performance ♦ hiring staff with suitable skills who are friendly and helpful ♦ setting and evaluating staff targets ♦ ensuring staff follow complaints procedures	♦ using the internet to look at the customer care statements of well-known organisations ♦ interviewing family members and friends about their customer care experiences ♦ using multimedia resources to look at good customer care and poor customer care ♦ conducting customer care assessment of the centre's canteen ♦ setting up a blog where learners can post their customer care experiences, both good and bad, throughout the year ♦ finding information about organisations which are well known for good customer care ♦ mystery shopping — giving learners a list of quality checks and asking them to pretend to be a mystery shopper in an organisation of their choice and to present back to the class ♦ acting out different scenarios based on different types of customers ♦ inviting guest speakers (such as customer care managers or store managers) to share their customer care policies and the benefits of looking after customers

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Outlining employee responsibilities for health and safety	Health and safety responsibilities of employees: ♦ understanding what employees must do to observe health and safety rules to meet current legislation ♦ identifying hazards in the office and measures to ensure safe practice ♦ completing an accident report form	♦ touring the centre or an external business to identify health and safety, and security measures, and identifying employee responsibilities ♦ using case studies highlighting good and bad employee practices ♦ using 'spot the hazards' workplace pictures ♦ using multimedia resources exemplifying good and bad health and safety, and security employee practices ♦ designing and displaying simple posters to remind staff of health and safety matters, and their responsibilities ♦ using Health and Safety Executive resources, including their website
Outlining an employee responsibility for the security of people, property and information	Employee responsibilities for security of people, property and information: ♦ following organisational procedures to protect people, for example wearing ID badge and signing in on entry ♦ following organisational procedures to protect property, for example putting personal belongings in lockers, not giving access codes to others, locking up portable devices ♦ following organisational procedures to protect paper and electronic information, for example changing passwords, encrypting documents, locking storage, locking monitors when not at desk	♦ creating a simple security checklist, and assessing the security of people and property of their chosen organisation ♦ asking a family member or friend about their security responsibilities in their workplace ♦ studying the centre's policies and procedures for security, and health and safety — matching to employee responsibilities ♦ password protecting electronic files ♦ implementing good file management techniques throughout the Course

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Carrying out tasks to prepare for an event	Carrying out tasks to prepare for an event: ♦ preparing a to-do list or priorities list ♦ entering details into an e-diary ♦ checking the availability of rooms and how to book them ♦ using spreadsheets, databases or websites to produce or access relevant information ♦ selecting resources from a given list ♦ creating a room layout plan ♦ using word processing to prepare name badges, advertising, invitations, place-cards, tickets ♦ using databases to produce details of delegates and performers ♦ using spreadsheets to produce relevant information for use during the event ♦ using presentation applications to prepare a presentation	Events, real or simulated, may include: ♦ meetings ♦ school events, eg dances, ceilidhs, parents' information evenings, careers fairs, trips, assemblies ♦ fundraising and charity events, such as coffee mornings ♦ book-club meetings ♦ interviews ♦ business trips ♦ promotional events ♦ presentations ♦ award ceremonies ♦ attending exhibitions The specific tasks and activities involved in preparing for the event will depend on its type and could include: ♦ using an e-diary ♦ gathering information about catering ♦ using the internet to gather information about accommodation and travel information ♦ creating a resources checklist ♦ creating letters requesting permission ♦ amending letters for attendees and guest speakers ♦ budgeting ♦ sending e-mails to the caterer listing requirements ♦ advertising materials to display at the event ♦ a presentation to run in the background at the event

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Carrying out follow-up tasks	Carrying out follow-up tasks: ♦ preparing an evaluation form ♦ presenting evaluation responses, for example a chart, preparing thank you letters (to the venue, host, participants and guests) ♦ calculating actual event costs ♦ editing a press release	Carrying out follow-up activities appropriate to the event: ♦ creating a simple feedback form — online or otherwise ♦ preparing charts ♦ writing thank you letters to attendees and guests ♦ amending spreadsheet or database details ♦ updating a newsletter

The table above gives examples of learning and teaching activities that may be used when delivering the Course. This would be classified as naturally occurring evidence which could be used to demonstrate that the learner has met the Assessment Standards within the Unit Specifications.

There are a number of assessment strategies that could be used in this Unit, including:

♦ completing tasks that include short answer theory questions
♦ submitting a portfolio of tasks that meet all Outcomes and Assessment Standards

Information about assessment approaches in this Unit is given in the National 4 Administration and IT *Course Support Notes.*

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

Combining assessment within Units

Although the Outcomes may be assessed either separately or holistically, combined assessment is recommended. However, it must be clear how the evidence covers each Outcome.

When assessment within the Unit is holistic, teachers and lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each individual Outcome to ensure that learners who do not achieve all Outcomes may still get the recognition for the Outcome or Outcomes they have achieved.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these Unit Support Notes is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approaches to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

♦ [Assessment arrangements](#)
♦ [Building the Curriculum 3–5](#)
♦ [Guide to Assessment](#)
♦ [Recent SQA research](#)
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History of changes to Unit Support Notes

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Unit Support Notes — IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4)

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the IT Solutions for Administrators (National 4) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

♦ the Unit Specification
♦ the Course Specification
♦ the Added Value Unit Specification
♦ the Course Support Notes
♦ appropriate assessment support materials

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to develop learners' straightforward skills in IT and organising and processing information in administration-related contexts. Learners will use the functions of the following IT applications: word processing, spreadsheets and databases, to create and edit simple business documents.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

♦ use straightforward functions of a spreadsheet
♦ use straightforward functions of a flat database
♦ use straightforward functions of word processing

Progression into this Unit

Learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following or by equivalent qualifications or experience:

♦ National 3 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
♦ Literacy (National 3) Unit
♦ Numeracy (National 3) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the Administration and IT (National 4) *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit or its components may provide progression to:

♦ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
♦ further study, employment or training

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

Learning and teaching approaches should be learner-centred, participative and practical in nature. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning, with an activity approach being used to enable learners to develop all the relevant IT skills effectively. The underpinning knowledge should be integrated with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities.

The table below suggests some activities which could support the delivery of this Unit and which may suit the needs of learners with different learning styles.

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use straightforward functions of a spreadsheet	Editing a worksheet from keyed-in and handwritten instructions: ♦ inserting and editing information ♦ inserting or deleting rows or columns ♦ deleting comments ♦ sorting on one column Applying formats: ♦ text alignment ♦ borders and shading ♦ bold, italics and underline ♦ font style and size ♦ currency, decimals and percentages	♦ preparing costings and budgets for a real event or simulated event ♦ calculating sales revenue ♦ calculating monthly or annual sales and profit figures ♦ calculating commission for businesses or employees ♦ calculating expenses claims for staff ♦ costing various accommodation or catering options ♦ calculating total money raised from fundraising ♦ presenting results from surveys in chart format

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use straightforward functions of a spreadsheet (continued)	Inserting formulae: ♦ basic arithmetical formulae ♦ average ♦ maximum ♦ minimum ♦ count Printing worksheets or extracts of worksheets: ♦ showing value view ♦ showing formulae view ♦ with and without gridlines ♦ with and without row and column headings ♦ in portrait and landscape orientation ♦ with headers and footers ♦ to fit on one page Creating a pie chart, bar or column chart, and line graph from a specified range: ♦ labelling axis and legend appropriately ♦ using data labels ♦ printing charts embedded in worksheet and presented separately	

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use straightforward functions of a flat database	Editing a table, using different functions, from keyed-in and handwritten instructions: ♦ amending fields and records ♦ inserting and deleting fields and records ♦ formatting fields: — yes/no — text Manipulating information by searching on one field using the following operators: ♦ equals ♦ greater than ♦ less than ♦ equal to or greater than ♦ equal to or less than Manipulating information by sorting on one field: ♦ ascending ♦ descending Presenting information by creating a report and a form with: ♦ specified fields ♦ a given heading ♦ a given footer	Working with database files: ♦ address book ♦ supplier list ♦ customer list ♦ list of attendees for an event ♦ employee details ♦ branch details ♦ employee training details

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use straightforward functions of word processing	Creating and editing business documents and amending text from keyed-in and handwritten instructions. Using text formats, such as: ♦ change font and font size ♦ use bold, italics and underline ♦ align text ♦ change line spacing ♦ indenting ♦ use bullets and numbering Using manuscript correction signs, such as: ♦ insert ♦ stet ♦ transpose ♦ new paragraph ♦ bold, underline, italics, and change capitalisation	Creating simple business documents that include: ♦ letters, for example application, thank you, enquiry ♦ forms, for example electronic travel form, booking form ♦ an itinerary ♦ an agenda ♦ a personal CV ♦ reports of research findings ♦ a staff handbook ♦ a monthly report ♦ a leaflet

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use straightforward functions of word processing (continued)	Creating a simple table: ♦ inserting, deleting or amending data ♦ adding or deleting row/s ♦ adding or deleting column/s ♦ changing column widths ♦ changing row height ♦ including and removing borders ♦ inserting shading within cells ♦ sorting data on one column Presentation of the document, such as: ♦ setting and changing margins ♦ inserting headers and footers ♦ using borders and shading ♦ page numbering ♦ using portrait and landscape layout for a 1-page document ♦ using the whole document ♦ using a specific size on the page ♦ applying the correct house style	

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use straightforward functions of word processing (continued)	Importing data into a business document: ♦ data from a spreadsheet ♦ a chart from a spreadsheet ♦ data from a database ♦ a graphic from a file ♦ information from a word-processed document ♦ information from the internet Inserting a graphic from the internet.	

The table above gives examples of learning and teaching activities that may be used when delivering the Course. This would be classified as naturally occurring evidence which could be used to demonstrate that the learner has met the Assessment Standards within the Unit Specifications. This could include submitting a portfolio of computer-based tasks that meet all Outcomes and Assessment Standards.

Information about assessment approaches in this Unit is given in the National 4 Administration and IT *Course Support Notes.*

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

Combining assessment within Units

Although the Outcomes may be assessed either separately or holistically, combined assessment is recommended. However, it must be clear how the evidence covers each Outcome.

When assessment within the Unit is holistic, teachers and lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each individual Outcome to ensure that learners who do not achieve all Outcomes may still get the recognition for the Outcome or Outcomes they have achieved.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these Unit Support Notes is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approaches to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

♦ [Assessment arrangements](#)
♦ [Building the Curriculum 3–5](#)
♦ [Guide to Assessment](#)
♦ [Recent SQA research](#)
♦ [Remote assessment](#)
♦ [SCQF Handbook](#)
♦ [SCQF level descriptors tool](#)
♦ [SQA's Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)

Administrative information

Published: August 2024 (version 2.0)

History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Changes to wording in the 'Approaches to learning and teaching' section for clarification.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015
2.0	Clarified the 'General guidance on the Unit' section. Amended the description of the Units in the 'Approaches to assessment' section to be more specific. Removed reference to desktop publishing throughout. Some changes made to the format to improve accessibility.	Qualifications Manager	August 2024

Unit Support Notes — Communication in Administration (National 4)

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Communication in Administration (National 4) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

♦ the *Unit Specification*
♦ the *Course Specification*
♦ the *Added Value Unit Specification*
♦ the *Course Support Notes*
♦ appropriate assessment support materials

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to enable learners to use IT for gathering and sharing information with others in administration contexts. Learners will develop an understanding of the appropriate methods for gathering information and of how to communicate information, making use of appropriate electronic methods.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

♦ use digital technologies to gather information
♦ use digital technologies to prepare and communicate information

Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following or by equivalent qualifications or experience:

♦ National 3 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
♦ Literacy (National 3) Unit
♦ Numeracy (National 3) Unit

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 4 Administration and IT *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit or its components may provide progression to:

♦ National 5 Administration and IT Course or relevant component Units
♦ further study, employment and training

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

Learning and teaching approaches should be learner-centred, participative and practical in nature. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning, with an activity approach being used to enable learners to develop all the relevant IT skills effectively. The underpinning knowledge should be combined with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities.

The table below suggests some activities which could support the delivery of this Unit and which may suit the needs of learners with different learning styles.

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use digital technologies to gather information	Searching for and extracting relevant information from the internet: ♦ using search engines ♦ navigating hyperlinks ♦ copying information from a web page to another document, for example a word-processing document, presentation, leaflet ♦ using favourites or bookmarks ♦ printing information and an extract of information Using files from an internal network (intranet) The specifics of this will depend on the set-up of intranets within individual educational establishments.	♦ using internet for research, for example travel information, maps, venues, accommodation prices ♦ providing practical examples of reliable and unreliable sources of information ♦ using shared areas on the centre's network

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use digital technologies to prepare and communicate information	Editing a presentation: ♦ inserting, editing and formatting text ♦ aligning text ♦ inserting graphics from an e-file or the internet ♦ using bullets ♦ creating charts and tables ♦ adding and deleting a slide ♦ animating text and objects ♦ importing data from other applications and the internet ♦ changing slide content layout ♦ applying slide transitions ♦ changing slide order ♦ applying and changing background, design and colour scheme ♦ printing presentation in slide and handout format	♦ creating and editing presentations and to support real events ♦ preparing presentations for others to use ♦ preparing presentations to show on a screen for visitors ♦ exploring opportunities for cross-curricular links to improve the aesthetics of presentations ♦ using e-mail to encourage a paperless environment, for example homework, invitations for events, class work, peer assessment ♦ uploading files to the centre's network, for example photographs, presentation, notices

Topic	Skills, knowledge and understanding	Suggested experiences and activities
Use digital technologies to prepare and communicate information (continued)	Using electronic methods to communicate information, such as: ♦ e-mail: — composing an e-mail by entering text — sending to one recipient — marking urgent — adding an attachment — using an appropriate layout ♦ use an e-diary — scheduling an appointment — specific times and all-day events — setting reminder — printing calendar: in daily, weekly, monthly view	

The table above gives examples of learning and teaching activities that may be used when delivering the Course. This would be classified as naturally occurring evidence which could be used to demonstrate that the learner has met the Assessment Standards within the Unit Specifications. This could include submitting a portfolio of computer-based tasks that meet all Outcomes and Assessment Standards.

Information about assessment approaches in this Unit is given in the National 4 Administration and IT *Course Support Notes.*

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

Combining assessment within Units

Although the Outcomes may be assessed either separately or holistically, combined assessment is recommended. However, it must be clear how the evidence covers each Outcome.

When assessment within the Unit is holistic, teachers and lecturers should take particular care to track the evidence for each individual Outcome to ensure that learners who do not achieve all Outcomes may still get the recognition for the Outcome or Outcomes they have achieved.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approaches to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

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