# HIGHER ADMINISTRATION AND IT

**THE COURSEWORK, ASSIGNMENT AND QUESTION PAPER**

Higher Administration and IT consists of three units:

- Administrative Theory and Practice (ATP)
- IT Solutions for Administrators (ITSA)
- Communication in Administration (CiA)

**UNIT ASSESSMENT**

Unit assessment for the Higher Administration and IT course can be done in discrete units, as an integrated/holistic assessment or by following a portfolio approach.

Administrative Theory and Practice:  In this unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

- Knowledge and understanding of administration in the workplace and related aspects
- Knowledge and understanding of effective teams and time and task management
- Knowledge and understanding of the features of good customer care and the benefits of good, and consequences of poor, customer care

IT Solutions for Administrators:  In this unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

- Skills in using a range of complex functions of the following IT applications – word processing, spreadsheets, databases – to solve problems in an administration-related context
- Skills in analysing, processing and managing information in order to create and edit relatively complex business documents

Communication in Administration:  In this unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

- Advanced skills in using IT to communicate information with others in administration-related contexts
- Knowledge and understanding of barriers to communication and ways of overcoming them
- Knowledge and understanding of how to maintain the security and confidentiality of information

**INTEGRATED/HOLISTIC ASSESSMENT**

An integrated/holistic assessment will take a combined approach and encompass a range of tasks which meet the required assessment standards for all three units.

**PORTFOLIO APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT**

During the time of studying the Higher Administration and IT course, a portfolio of the pupils' work can be built up.  The evidence must meet the requirements of the assessment standards and outcomes of all three units in the course.

**ASSESSMENT DECISIONS**

For all unit assessments, pupils will be assessed on a pass/fail basis internally within school.  SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

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*Preparation for unit assessments should be thorough revision and an evaluation of the pupil's performance in the class and practice tasks, beforehand.  Pupils must be sure of what will be expected of them.  One re-assessment opportunity is permitted and can be on specific outcomes or assessment standards which have not been met only.*

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**THE COURSE ASSESSMENT**

The course assessment is made up of <u>two</u> components:  an assignment and a question paper which are <u>externally</u> assessed as shown below:

<u>Assignment</u>

| Component 1 | Content | Timing and Marks |
|---|---|---|
| Assignment | • Use of complex IT functions in word processing, spreadsheets, databases, desktop publishing, and presentation software to produce, process and manage information and solve problems in unfamiliar contexts<br>• Skills in electronic research to source complex information<br>• Skills in effective communication, taking account of its context, purpose and audience<br>• A wide range of administrative skills related to planning and organising to complete the assignment | This assignment is completed under supervised conditions in class and lasts for **2 hours**.<br><br>Total marks for Assignment:  70 marks |

The assignment will have two stages:  **Stage 1** – planning, including contingency planning and **Stage 2** – follow-up tasks.  The table below lists possible tasks in the assignment:

| Stage 1- planning, including contingency planning |
|---|
| Selecting venues |
| Managing attendee information |
| Preparing word processing, spreadsheet and database materials |
| Planning resources needed |

| Stage 2 – follow-up tasks |
|---|
| Carrying out an evaluation |
| Analysing the results of feedback |
| Costing |
| Preparing follow-up documentation |
| Preparing notes or action points |

<u>Question Paper</u>

| Component 2 | Content | Timing and Marks |
|---|---|---|
| Question Paper | • A mixture of mandatory short and extended response questions drawn from the units Administrative Theory and Practice and Communication in Administration | This question paper is completed under supervised conditions and lasts for **1 hour and 30 mins**.<br><br>Total marks for Question Paper:  50 marks |

*Preparation for the assignment and the question paper should take the form of revision tasks and specimen or past assignment/question paper practice.  Pupils are advised to attend Study Support Sessions arranged at a suitable time with their own teacher or a colleague from Business Studies. Pupils are also encouraged to make use of available computers during free or study time.*

## COMMAND WORDS

A thorough appreciation of a number of command words is essential in Higher Administration and IT as marks are awarded according to the specific command word(s) in any question.

A remark on the command words in a recent report stated:

'….. candidates did not show clear understanding of what was required in order to gain marks.'
**SQA External Assessor Report**

> *All pupils are issued with a help-sheet indicating which command words are used e.g. **discuss**, **compare** and **describe** and examples are also given on the help-sheet. Pupils need to pay particular attention to feedback given by the teacher and their peers with regards to their ability to obey the command word instructions.*
>
> *To practise using different command words, pupils should focus on the same topic but use a variety of command words. For example, the questions below cover the same topic, but test pupils on different command words.*
>
> *Q1 – **Describe** two possible consequences to the organisation of failing to provide good customer care. (4 marks)*
>
> *Q2 – **Discuss** the problems faced by an organisation which neglects good customer care. (6 marks)*

## HOMEWORK

Homework tasks covering knowledge and understanding of administration are regularly issued throughout the year.

> *Pupils are asked to comment on their own performance after each piece of homework since self-evaluation is essential.*

## PRACTICAL WORK

So much of the Higher Administration and IT course depends on a pupil having excellent IT skills. Database, spreadsheet and word processing are the core elements of ITSA and CiA Units. Pupils must learn how to quickly integrate data from one package into another e.g. a spreadsheet chart dynamically linked to a word-processed report.

> *Pupils need to practise as much as possible with similar software to the school system. A wide range of resources are available on request and pupils can also use the GLOW digital network to access files and e-mail work from one location to another.*

## TARGET SETTING

Pupils are encouraged to set personal targets as part of the course and the use of Skills Scans and Personal Development Plans is also recommended.

> *Pupils should regularly review their targets and discuss concerns with their parents, peers and school staff, at an early stage.*