NATIONAL 5 ADMINISTRATION AND IT

THE COURSEWORK AND THE ASSIGNMENT

National 5 Administration and IT consists of three units:

- Administrative Practices (AP)
- IT Solutions for Administrators (ITSA)
- Communication in Administration (CiA)

UNIT ASSESSMENT

Unit assessment for the National 5 Administration and IT course can be done in discrete units or as an integrated/holistic assessment.

Administrative Practices: In this unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of their:

- Skills in carrying out a range of administrative tasks to organise and support events
- Knowledge and understanding of key legislation affecting both organisations and employees, the benefits to organisations of good customer care and skills, and qualities and attributes required of administrators

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

- Skills in using the following IT applications; word processing, spreadsheets and databases, in largely familiar administrative contexts
- Skills in problem solving and organising and managing information in largely familiar administrative contexts

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

- Skills in using IT for gathering information from the internet and intranet
- Skills in preparing information, using multimedia and desktop publishing
- Ability to communicate using electronic methods

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.

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.

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.

THE COURSE ASSESSMENT

The course assessment is made up of a closed-book assignment which is externally assessed as shown below:

Component	Content	Timing and Marks
Closed-book Assignment	• Using advanced IT functions in word processing, spreadsheets, databases, presentations and desk top publishing to produce and process information in familiar contexts • Skills in using technology for investigation • Skills in using technology for electronic communication, taking account of the context, audience and purpose of communication • Administrative skills related to organising and supporting an event • Skills in problem solving	This assignment is completed under supervised conditions in class and lasts for **3 hours**. Total marks for Assignment: 70 marks

The assignment will have two stages: **Stage 1** – preparing for an event including contingency planning and **Stage 2** – follow-up tasks. The tables below list possible tasks in the assignment:

Stage 1- preparing for an event including contingency planning
Preparing a to-do/priorities list
Entering details into an e-diary
Searching for information about the venue and resources and how to book them
Using appropriate software to prepare the agenda
Using appropriate software to prepare materials which could include name badges, advertising, invitations, place-cards
Using databases for details of delegates/performers and to carry out the following functions: update, search, mail-merge and prepare letters, labels, attendees' report
Using presentation software to prepare the key speaker's presentation, background/welcoming presentation
Resolve a double-booking of the venue
Prepare additional documents at short notice
Changing travel or other arrangements due to unforeseen circumstances

Stage 2 – follow-up tasks
Prepare an evaluation of the event
Collate responses and present findings in a variety of formats, including charts
Prepare 'thank you' letters (to the venue host, participants and guests), using mail-merge
Prepare minutes, notes or action points
Prepare event costings and expenses

Preparation for the assignment should take the form of revision tasks and specimen or past assignment 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.

Question Paper

Component 2	Content	Timing and Marks
Question Paper	• Using spreadsheets to perform the following functions: edit data, sort data, calculate using formulae, create charts • Using databases to perform the following functions: update data, search data, prepare labels and reports • 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 **2 hours**. Total marks for Question Paper: 50 marks

COMMAND WORDS

A thorough appreciation of a number of command words is essential in National 5 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. ***justify****,* ***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 – ***Outline*** *the problems faced by an organisation which neglects good customer care. (4 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 National 5 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 included in 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.