

Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

To: Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

On: 7 February 2017

Changes to National Qualifications

**Report by
Joint Secretary (Teachers' Side)**

It is becoming clear that a degree of confusion remains with regard to the implications of the changes to N5 awards for session 2017/18. The removal of mandatory units from N5 courses from August 2017 has been agreed. However, N4 courses will retain mandatory internal unit assessments (plus added value assessment) and accordingly will be organised and assessed entirely differently from those at N5. In light of these significant differences, and in the interests of ensuring the effective delivery of courses for all students, the EIS believes that schools should be planning for discrete N4 and N5 classes, rather than seeking to run bi-level classes where pupils would face different assessment arrangements. A further matter to be considered is that the absence of unit assessment at N5 will have the consequence of there being no fall-back award of unit passes for candidates who do not pass the final exam. Free standing unit assessments will remain available but students will require to be entered for either a N5 course award (based on external assessment) or a series of unit awards – they cannot be entered for both.

Action

Ensuring that candidates are enrolled for courses which best suit their prior learning and attainment at the point at which options are being considered will be essential. It is important that school senior managers facilitate dialogue on assessment and timetabling matters with their staff as a matter of urgency with a view to ensuring the school's appropriate response to such changes to senior phase course design and assessment.