



Higher  
Course  
Specification



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# Higher English Course Specification (C724 76)

**Valid from August 2014**

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

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## Course outline

**Course title:** Higher English

**SCQF:** level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)

**Course code:** C724 76

### Mandatory Units

The Course is made up of two mandatory Units and a Course assessment

**H23H 76 English: Analysis and Evaluation (Higher) 9 SCQF credit points**

**And either:**

**H23T 76 English: Creation and Production (Higher) 9 SCQF credit points**

**Or**

**H6NS 76 English: Creation and Production with a Scottish Context (Higher) 9 SCQF credit points**

**Course assessment 6 SCQF credit points**

This Course includes six SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

\*Scottish Studies Award contributing Unit: This Course Specification should be read in conjunction with the relevant Scottish Studies Unit Specification on the [Scottish Studies Award web page](#).

### Recommended entry

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

- ◆ National 5 English Course or relevant Component Units

### Core Skills

Achievement of this Course gives automatic certification of the following:

- ◆ Complete Core Skill: Communication at SCQF level 6

### Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ other qualifications in English or related areas
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

## **Equality and inclusion**

This Course Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

## **Rationale**

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its Component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities, as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

## **Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles**

Language and literacy are of personal, social and economic importance. Learners' ability to use language lies at the centre of the development and expression of their emotions, thinking, learning and sense of personal identity.

The Course provides learners with the opportunity to develop skills in listening, talking, reading and writing, which are essential for learning, life and work, and to develop their ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings and respond to those of other people.

The Course enables learners to understand and use vocabulary, word patterns, text structures and style. Learners recognise, analyse and use language for a range of purposes. Through this Course, learners develop the ability to understand and use language in practical and relevant contexts.

Learners encounter a wide range of different types of texts in different media. Building on the four capacities, the Course enables learners to communicate, be critical thinkers, develop cultural awareness and be creative. Learners develop an appreciation of Scotland's literary and linguistic heritage.

## **Purposes and aims of the Course**

The main purpose of the Course is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop the skills of listening, talking, reading and writing in order to understand and use language.

As learners develop their literacy skills, they will be able to process information more easily, apply knowledge of language in practical and relevant contexts, and gain confidence to undertake new and more challenging tasks in a variety of situations.

Building on literacy skills, the Course develops understanding of the complexities of language, including through the study of a wide range of texts. The Course develops high levels of analytical thinking and understanding of the impact of language.

The Course offers learners opportunities to develop and extend a wide range of skills. In particular, the Course aims to enable learners to develop the ability to:

- ◆ listen, talk, read and write, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ understand, analyse and evaluate texts, including Scottish texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language and media
- ◆ create and produce texts, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ apply knowledge and understanding of language

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

The Course provides flexibility, personalisation and choice to enable learners to achieve in different ways and at different paces.

The Course provides opportunities for learners to build on prior learning experienced in a broad general education or in English qualifications at a lower SCQF level.

The Course provides learners with the opportunity to use different media effectively for learning and communication, to develop an understanding of how language works and to use language to communicate ideas and information in English.

The Course also provides learners with the opportunity to use creative and critical thinking to synthesise ideas and arguments, to develop critical literacy skills, personal, interpersonal and team-working skills, and independent learning, and to enhance their enjoyment and their understanding of their own and other cultures.

The Course fosters an appreciation of language awareness and of a wide range of literature and texts. This enables learners to access their own cultural heritage and history, as well as the culture and history of others.

Higher English offers learners the opportunity to develop detailed and complex language skills in the contexts of literature, language and media.

The Course is designed to be accessible. The Units are organised by the receptive (listening and reading) and productive (talking and writing) skills of language.

The Course provides opportunities for vertical and lateral progression to National Courses, and to other SQA qualifications in English and related fields.

# Course structure and conditions of award

## Course structure

This Course is made up of two mandatory Units. The Course provides learners with the opportunity to develop their listening, talking, reading and writing skills in order to understand and use language. The two Units include the four language skills of listening, talking, reading and writing.

The structure of the Units enables learners to focus on the skills required to understand and use language and to integrate listening, talking, reading and writing skills across the Units. Each Unit also offers opportunities for learners to focus on particular skills.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

### **English: Analysis and Evaluation (Higher)**

The purpose of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop listening and reading skills in the contexts of literature, language and media. Learners develop the skills needed to understand, analyse and evaluate detailed and complex texts.

### **English: Creation and Production (Higher)**

The purpose of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop talking and writing skills in a wide range of contexts. Learners develop the skills needed to create and produce detailed and complex language in both written and oral forms.

## Conditions of award

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding

Further information on the assessment of the skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course is given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section. This covers:

- ◆ listening, talking, reading and writing skills, as appropriate to purpose and audience
- ◆ understanding, analysing and evaluating detailed and complex texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language and media — texts studied must include Scottish texts
- ◆ creating and producing detailed and complex texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in a wide range of contexts
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of language

The Course enables learners to communicate, be critical thinkers, develop cultural awareness and be creative.

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.sqa.org.uk/scqf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/scqf)).

# Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

## Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*.

They can be assessed on an individual Unit basis or by using other approaches which combine the assessment for more than one Unit.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows.

### **English: Analysis and Evaluation (Higher)**

Through the study of detailed and complex texts in the contexts of literature, language or media, learners will use their listening and reading skills to provide evidence of understanding, analysis and evaluation, as appropriate to purpose and audience.

### **English: Creation and Production (Higher)**

Learners will be required to provide evidence of their talking and writing skills to create and produce detailed and complex texts in a chosen context. Learners will be required to demonstrate technical accuracy in written texts.

## Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#).<sup>1</sup> At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

In the Higher English Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

Learners will provide evidence of their reading and writing skills, and their ability to understand and use English language. The Course assessment will take the form of a [portfolio](#)<sup>2</sup> through which learners will demonstrate their writing skills and two [question papers](#)<sup>3</sup> through which learners will demonstrate their reading skills. Learners will answer at least one question on a Scottish text.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html).

<sup>2</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html).

<sup>3</sup> See link above for definition

# Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

## 1 Literacy

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

## 5 Thinking skills

- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Literacy skills shown in this National Course provide automatic certification of Core Skill: Communication at SCQF level 6.

# Administrative information

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**Published:** April 2015 (version 2.0)

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## History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	Pages 2 and 9 – Core skills information added Page 6 - under 'English: Creation and Production (Higher)', we have replaced the word 'texts' with 'language' to match the wording of the Outcome Page 7 – under 'Unit assessment', the wording has been made clearer regarding Unit-by-Unit versus combined approaches	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014
	1.2	Scottish Studies Award Unit contributing information added. No other changes made to document content	Qualifications Manager	September 2014
	2.0	Number of question papers updated from 1 to 2 in Course Assessment section.	Qualifications Manager	April 2015

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Note: You are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the Course Specification.

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