

Advanced Higher Physical Education Draft Course/Unit Support Notes



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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).

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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Advanced Higher Physical Education 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 *Course Assessment Specification* and the *Unit Specifications* for the Units in the Course.

These support notes cover both the Advanced Higher Course and the Units in it.

General guidance on the Course/Units

Aims

The aims of the Course are to enable learners to:

- ◆ investigate and critically evaluate how a range of factors impact on performance
- ◆ understand and apply methods to develop performance
- ◆ develop independent research and investigation skills
- ◆ analyse how skills, techniques and strategies combine to produce effective performance
- ◆ select and apply a range of movement and performance skills by making informed decisions during high-level performance
- ◆ carry out high-level performance in selected physical activities
- ◆ analyse and evaluate the process of performance development

This Course will also give learners the opportunity to develop their listening and talking skills as well as their skills in applying, analysing and evaluating, emotional and physical wellbeing and working with others.

Progression

In order to do this Course, learners should have achieved the Higher Physical Education Course.

Learners who have achieved this Advanced Higher Course may progress to further study, employment and/or training. Opportunities for progression include:

- ◆ Progression to other SQA qualifications:
 - Progression to other qualifications at the same level of the Course, for example Professional Development Awards (PDAs), Higher National Certificates (HNCs)
- ◆ Progression to further/higher education:
 - For many learners a key transition point will be to further or higher education, for example to Higher National Certificates (HNCs)/Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) or degree programmes. Examples of further and higher education programmes that learners doing the Course might progress to are sports science, sports coaching or health and fitness courses.
 - Advanced Higher Courses provide good preparation for learners progressing to further and higher education as learners doing Advanced Higher Courses must be able to work with more independence and less supervision. This eases their transition to further/higher education.

Advanced Higher Courses may also allow 'advanced standing' or partial credit towards the first year of study of a degree programme.

- Advanced Higher Courses are challenging and testing qualifications: learners who have achieved multiple Advanced Higher Courses are regarded as having a proven level of ability which attests to their readiness for higher education in HEIs in other parts of the UK as well as in Scotland.
- ◆ Progression to employment:
 - For many learners, progression will be directly to employment or work-based training programmes. Examples of employment opportunities and training programmes are health and fitness-related professions.

This Advanced Higher could be used as a broadening course, as part of the Scottish Baccalaureate in Expressive Arts. The Scottish Baccalaureates in Expressive Arts, Languages, Science, and Social Sciences consist of coherent groups of subjects at Higher and Advanced Higher level. Each award consists of two Advanced Highers, one Higher and an Interdisciplinary Project which adds breadth and value and helps learners to develop generic skills, attitudes and confidence that will help them make the transition into higher education or employment.

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.

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification* for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course.

The development of subject-specific and generic skills is central to the Course. Learners should be made aware of the skills they are developing and of the transferability of them. It is the transferability that will help learners with further study and enhance their personal effectiveness.

The list below shows where there are likely to be opportunities to develop mandatory skills in or across the Units. However, the delivery mode adopted and the approaches to learning and teaching will determine how and where the opportunities arise.

These include:

- ◆ selecting and applying a range of movement and performance skills by making informed decisions during high-level performance

- ◆ demonstrating a range of approaches for developing or refining movement skills, fitness and performance, composition or tactics
- ◆ carrying out high-level performance in selected physical activities
- ◆ developing independent research and investigation skills
- ◆ analysing and evaluating performance development
- ◆ analysing and critically evaluating their own effectiveness in creating performance solutions in challenging performance situations
- ◆ analysing and critically evaluating how a range of factors impact on performance
- ◆ applying performance development methodologies
- ◆ analysing how skills, techniques and strategies combine to produce effective performance

Further information on the mandatory skills which this Course develops is available in Appendix 1 of these *Course and Unit Support Notes*.

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).

Approaches to learning and teaching

The main purpose of this Course is to develop performance skills. The central theme of the Course is to develop approaches to enhance performance through evaluation and analysis.

Practical, experiential learning in relevant contexts and supported investigation techniques should be used as the vehicle for developing knowledge, understanding and skills. The Course includes development of thinking and practical skills through problem-solving activities.

The Course will enable learners to develop skills, positive attitudes and attributes in performance and physical activity contexts and to transfer these to other contexts.

Advanced Higher Courses place more demands on learners as there will be a higher proportion of independent study and less direct supervision. Some of the approaches to learning and teaching suggested for other levels (in particular, Higher) may also apply at Advanced Higher level but there will be a stronger emphasis on independent learning.

For Advanced Higher Courses, a significant amount of learning may be self-directed and require learners to demonstrate a more mature approach to learning and the ability to work on their own initiative. This can be very challenging for some learners, who may feel isolated at times, and teachers and lecturers should have strategies for addressing this. These could include, for example, planning time for regular feedback sessions/discussions on a one-to-one basis and on a group basis led by the teacher or lecturer (where appropriate).

Teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to use an enquiring, critical and problem-solving approach to their learning. Learners should also be given the opportunity to practise and develop research and investigation skills and higher-order evaluation and analytical skills. The use of information and communications technology (ICT) can make a significant contribution to the development of these higher-order skills as research and investigation activities become more sophisticated.

Learners will engage in a variety of learning activities as appropriate to the subject, for example:

- ◆ researching information for their subject rather than receiving information from their teacher or lecturer
- ◆ using active and open-ended learning activities such as research, case studies and presentation tasks
- ◆ making use of the internet to draw conclusions about specific issues
- ◆ engaging in wide-ranging independent reading

- ◆ recording in a systematic way the results of research and independent investigation from different sources
- ◆ presenting findings/conclusions of research and investigation activities in a presentation
- ◆ participating in group work with peers and using collaborative learning opportunities to develop teamworking
- ◆ participating in informed debate and discussion with peers where they can demonstrate skills in constructing and sustaining lines of argument to provide challenge and enjoyment, breadth, and depth to learning
- ◆ drawing conclusions from complex information
- ◆ using sophisticated written and/or oral communication and presentation skills to present information
- ◆ using appropriate technological resources (eg web-based resources)
- ◆ using appropriate media resources (eg video clips)
- ◆ demonstrating development, improvement and refinement of techniques and practices in performance-based subjects
- ◆ investigate and critically evaluate how a range of factors impact on performance
- ◆ using real-life contexts and experiences familiar and relevant to young people to meaningfully hone and exemplify skills, knowledge and understanding
- ◆ participating in field trips and visits

Teachers and lecturers should support learners by having regular discussions with them and giving regular feedback. Some learning and teaching activities may be carried out on a group basis and, where this applies, learners could also receive feedback from their peers.

Teachers and lecturers should, where possible, provide opportunities to personalise learning for learners, and to enable them to have choices in approaches to learning and teaching. The flexibility in Advanced Higher Courses and the independence with which learners carry out the work lend themselves to this. Teachers and lecturers should also create opportunities for, and use, inclusive approaches to learning and teaching. This can be achieved by encouraging the use of a variety of learning and teaching strategies which suit the needs of all learners. Innovative and creative ways of using technology can also be valuable in creating inclusive learning and teaching approaches.

Centres are free to sequence the teaching of the Outcomes, Units and/or Course in any order they wish. For example:

- ◆ Each Unit could be delivered separately in any sequence.

And/or:

- ◆ All Units may be delivered in a combined way as part of the Course. If this approach is used, the Outcomes within Units may either be partially or fully combined.

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

The following skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work should be developed in this Course.

Literacy

1.1 Listening and talking

3 Health and wellbeing

3.2 Emotional wellbeing

3.3 Physical wellbeing

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

4.3 Working with others

5 Thinking skills

5.3 Applying

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Teachers and lecturers should ensure that learners have opportunities to develop these skills as an integral part of their learning experience.

It is important that learners are aware of the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that they are developing in the Course and the activities they are involved in that provide realistic opportunities to practise and/or improve them.

At Advanced Higher level it is expected that learners will be using a range of higher-order thinking skills. They will also develop skills in independent and autonomous learning.

Approaches to assessment

The Course assessment will consist of two Components: a performance and a project. The performance (Component 1) has 30% of the total marks available and will assess the learner's ability to carry out a single, high-level performance in one physical activity in a challenging, competitive or demanding context.

The performance will take the form of a single, challenging, extended performance requiring the learner to demonstrate consistently complex movement and performance skills with a high level of fluency and control. Learners will have the opportunity to demonstrate the following:

- ◆ select and apply a range of movement and performance skills by making informed decisions during high-level performance
- ◆ carry out high-level performance in selected physical activities

Learners must show that they understand and can appropriately respond to the varied demands presented by high-level performance, with respect for rules, regulations and etiquette which apply to the chosen physical activity. This performance must be of a sufficient length to allow learners to demonstrate the required skills.

The project (Component 2) has 70% of the total marks available. It will assess the learner's ability to integrate and apply skills, knowledge and understanding from across the Units. The project is designed to assess learners' research and investigation skills, as well as their ability to apply their knowledge and understanding to performance development.

The project will give learners the opportunity to demonstrate the following:

- ◆ investigate and critically evaluate how a range of factors impact on performance
- ◆ understand and apply methods to develop performance
- ◆ develop independent research and investigation skills to analyse how skills, techniques and strategies combine to produce effective performance
- ◆ analyse and evaluate the process of performance development

The project will have four sections:

1. Producing a project proposal
2. Undertaking primary and secondary research into performance development
3. Applying skills, knowledge and understanding to performance development
4. Interpreting information obtained, coming to evidenced and justified conclusions about the process of performance development

Assessment in Advanced Higher Courses will generally reflect the investigative nature of Courses at this level, together with high-level problem-solving and critical thinking skills and skills of analysis and synthesis.

This emphasis on higher-order skills, together with the more independent learning approaches that learners will use, distinguishes the added value at Advanced Higher level from the added value at other levels.

There are different approaches to assessment, and teachers and lecturers 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 teachers and lecturers. They should also be conducted in a supervised manner to ensure that the evidence provided is valid and reliable.

Unit assessment

The Course has two mandatory Units.

Physical Education: Performance Skills (Advanced Higher)

In this Unit, learners will develop movement and performance skills and techniques in selected activities. They will learn how to make effective decisions, to use, select and adapt these skills and techniques, and to perform highly effectively in challenging performance contexts.

Learners will develop consistency in the precision, control and fluency of movement. They will also learn how to respond to, and meet, the mental and physical demands of performance, in a safe and highly effective way. The Unit offers opportunities for personalisation and choice of physical activities.

Physical Education: Factors Impacting on Performance (Advanced Higher)

In this Unit, learners will develop their independent research, analytical and evaluative skills by investigating a range of factors that impact on performance in physical activities. Learners will investigate and consider how mental, emotional, social, physical and environmental factors can affect performance. As knowledge and understanding of factors underpinning performance development are consolidated through independent personal research, learners will modify and justify performance development plans based on the findings from their research. The Unit offers many opportunities for personalisation and choice of contexts.

Assessments must ensure that the evidence generated demonstrates, at the least, the minimum level of competence for each Unit. Teachers and lecturers preparing assessment methods should be clear about what that evidence will look like.

Sources of evidence likely to be suitable for Advanced Higher Units could include:

- ◆ meaningful contribution to group work and/or discussions (making use of log books, blogs, question and answer sessions to confirm individual learners have met the required standards)
- ◆ presentation of information to other groups and/or recorded oral evidence
- ◆ exemplification of concepts using (for example) a diagram
- ◆ interpretation of numerical data
- ◆ demonstration of performance with commentary/explanation/evaluation
- ◆ investigations
- ◆ answers to multiple choice questions
- ◆ short written responses
- ◆ extended response essay-type questions

Evidence should include the use of appropriate subject-specific terminology as well as the use of real-life examples where appropriate.

Flexibility in the method of assessment provides opportunities for learners to demonstrate attainment in a variety of ways and so reduce barriers to attainment.

The structure of an assessment used by a centre can take a variety of forms, for example:

- ◆ individual pieces of work could be collected in a folio as evidence for Outcomes and Assessment Standards
- ◆ assessment of each complete Outcome
- ◆ assessment that combines the Outcomes of one or more Units
- ◆ assessment that requires more than the minimum competence, which would allow learners to prepare for the Course assessment

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. However, such naturally occurring evidence must still be recorded and evidence such as written reports, recording forms, PowerPoint slides, drawings/graphs, video footage or observational checklists provided.

Combining assessment across Units

A combined approach could be established across the Assessment Standards for the Course Components. This approach could in turn provide opportunities for holistic or combined assessment tasks. Such a combined approach to assessment will enrich the assessment process for the learner, avoid duplication of tasks and thus allow more emphasis to be put on learning and teaching.

Together, the performance and project will add challenge and application to the Course as the learner will integrate, extend and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding they have learned during the Course. The learner will prepare for,

effectively perform, and evaluate a performance in a challenging environment. The choice of physical activity will allow for personalisation and choice.

The project will require application of research findings, knowledge and understanding to the investigation of a topic designed to develop an aspect of performance development.

Units will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*. Each Unit can be assessed on an individual Outcome-by-Outcome basis or via the use of combined assessment for some or all Outcomes.

A combined approach to assessment will enrich the assessment process for the learner, avoid duplication of tasks and allow more emphasis on learning and teaching. Evidence could be drawn from a range of activities for a combined assessment. Care must be taken to ensure that combined assessments provide appropriate evidence for all the Outcomes that they claim to assess. Observational checklists, video footage of practical activities and other approaches can be used to track achievement.

Combining assessment will also give centres more time to manage the assessment process more efficiently. When combining assessments across Units, teachers/lecturers should use e-assessment wherever possible. Learners can easily update project work, electronic or written diaries and recording sheets.

For some Advanced Higher Courses, it may be that a strand of work which contributes to a Course assessment method is started when a Unit is being delivered and is completed in the Course assessment. In these cases, it is important that the evidence for the Unit assessment is clearly distinguishable from that required for the Course assessment.

Preparation for Course assessment

Each Course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher or lecturer to enable learners to prepare for Course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the Course and at various points throughout the Course for consolidation and support. It may also be used for preparation for Unit assessment, and, towards the end of the Course, for further integration, revision and preparation and/or gathering evidence for Course assessment.

For this Advanced Higher Course, the assessment methods for Course assessment are a performance and a project. Learners should be given opportunities to practise these methods and prepare for them.

Examples of activities to include within this preparation time include:

- ◆ Preparing for the components of Course assessment, for example:
 - preparing for the performance and project components: selecting topics, gathering and researching information, evaluating and analysing findings,

developing and justifying conclusions, presenting the information (as appropriate)

- practising and refining performance skills
- thinking critically and evaluating the performance and subsequently solving problems relating to the performance

In relation to preparing for the performance and the project, teachers and lecturers should explain requirements to learners and the amount and nature of the support they can expect. However, at Advanced Higher level it is expected that learners will work with more independence and less supervision and support.

Authenticity

In terms of authenticity, there are a number of techniques and strategies to ensure that learners present work that is their own. Teachers and lecturers should put in place mechanisms to authenticate learners' evidence.

In Advanced Higher Courses, because learners will take greater responsibility for their own learning and work more independently, teachers and lecturers need to have measures in place to ensure that work produced is the learner's own work.

For example:

- ◆ regular checkpoint/progress meetings with learners
- ◆ short spot-check personal interviews
- ◆ checklists which record activity/progress
- ◆ photographs, films or audio records

Group work approaches as part of the preparation for assessment can be helpful to simulate real-life situations, share tasks and promote teamworking skills. However, group work is not appropriate once formal work on assessment has started.

For more information, please refer to SQA's [Guide to Assessment](#).

Added value

Advanced Higher Courses include assessment of added value which is assessed in the Course assessment.

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

In Advanced Higher Courses, added value involves the assessment of higher-order skills such as high-level and more sophisticated investigation and research skills, critical thinking skills and skills of analysis and synthesis. Learners may be required to analyse and reflect on their assessment activity by commenting on it and/or drawing conclusions with commentary/justification. These skills contribute

to the uniqueness of Advanced Higher Courses and to the overall higher level of performance expected at this level.

The learner will be assessed through a combination of a single performance and a project. Together they will add challenge and application to the Course as the learner will integrate, extend and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding they have learned during the Course.

In this Course assessment, added value will focus on the following:

- ◆ challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- ◆ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This Advanced Higher Course has a project as one of the assessment methods. The project is used to assess a wide range of high-order cognitive and performance skills and to integrate assessment. For example, learners should understand and apply methods to develop performance. The project brings a number of higher-order skills together, such as skills relating to planning, analysis, synthesis, evaluation and report writing. The learner will carry out a significant part of the work for the project independently with minimal supervision.

This Advanced Higher Course also has a performance as one of the assessment methods. As well as assessing application and challenge, the performance allows learners to demonstrate skills that show they can apply the knowledge and understanding which underpins the performance. In this way learners can demonstrate not only that they have the practical performance skills but also that they know how and when to use them, how to vary or adapt them to meet different and/or more difficult or unusual circumstances and how to apply them to more complex processes.

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/Unit 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: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

The greater flexibility and choice in Advanced Higher Courses provide opportunities to meet a range of learners' needs and may remove the need for learners to have assessment arrangements. However, where a disabled learner needs a reasonable adjustment/assessment arrangements to be made, you should refer to the guidance given in the above link.

Appendix 1: Further information on Units in the Course

<p>Mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Collecting information and data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ cycle of analysis process must include knowledge, understanding and application of this process in action: identifying current and future needs, planning, implementing, monitoring, receiving feedback, reflection, evaluation and adaptation◆ strengths and areas for development: ability to recognise and complete a 'strengths and areas for development' inventory◆ practice of observation — preparation, action and recovery phases of movement <p>Methods of collecting data and information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ using 'models' of performance to qualify performance◆ application of standardised test for strength and muscular endurance, body composition monitoring, cardiovascular function, flexibility, power, agility and speed◆ knowledge of differences between objective and subjective data◆ application of mechanical and movement observation and match analysis and data collection◆ application of analysis tools such as digital analysis software, observation schedules◆ primary and secondary research skills◆ reliability and validity of data, research and sources and information
<p>Performance skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ control of weight, space, time and flow in challenging contexts
<p>Mental factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ current methods of mental training, including motivation, concentration, focus of attention and mental toughness◆ training to improve tactics or competition response◆ information processing and decision-making — this includes knowledge and understanding of cue recognition, perception, refining skills, making judgements and improvisation◆ methods to develop decision-making abilities

Emotional factors

- ◆ intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
- ◆ personality types
- ◆ peer group
- ◆ emotional development and maturity
- ◆ accepting feedback

Social factors

- ◆ peer group
- ◆ competition environment
- ◆ maturity
- ◆ training demands

Physical factors*Fitness*

- ◆ application of knowledge, understanding of most appropriate fitness training principles and methods for activity selection

Skill

- ◆ application of optimal skill development and practice scheduling for activity selection

Tactics

- ◆ types of tactics/compositions
- ◆ decision making before and during performance
- ◆ adapting and changing compositions or formations

Physical activity choices — guidance and advice

Physical activities will normally be chosen from those covered within the Advanced Higher Physical Education Course at the presenting centre. Learners should discuss and agree with the teacher/lecturer the activities they want to undertake. Learners should be given every opportunity to develop activities for which they have a natural aptitude and which are of interest to them. Appendix 2 of these Higher Physical Education *Course Support Notes* contains a table of popular physical activities that centres can refer to for suggestions.

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that sufficient assessor expertise exists to manage the assessment process and assess learners' evidence. Before agreeing to assess an activity, the assessor might want to take account of the issues below:

- ◆ practicality of assessing activities, especially those outwith the usual learning environment
- ◆ health and safety and child protection issues
- ◆ available resources
- ◆ time involved in assessing the activity
- ◆ ensuring that the performance context is sufficiently challenging and provides the learner with the opportunity to demonstrate the range of skills required and thus generate sufficient evidence to meet all Assessment Standards
- ◆ collating, assessing and recording appropriate assessment evidence
- ◆ cycle of analysis process must include knowledge, understanding and application of this process in action: identifying current and future needs, planning, implementing, monitoring, receiving feedback, reflection, evaluation and adaptation

There is more guidance on physical activity selection in the 'Equality and inclusion' section and in Appendix 2 of these *Course Support Notes*.

Appendix 2: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa//14977.html.
- ◆ Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work
- ◆ Building the Curriculum 5: A Framework for Assessment
- ◆ [Course Specifications](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ [Overview of Qualification Reports](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ SCQF Handbook: User Guide (published 2009) and SCQF level descriptors (to be reviewed during 2011 to 2012): www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html
- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- ◆ [Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool](#)
- ◆ [Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers](#)

Administrative information

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History of changes to Advanced Higher draft Course/Unit Support Notes

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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