



Common questions about National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Physical Education

Where can I find information on unit thresholds?

We have republished the 'Understanding the next steps' documents on the [Physical Education subject page](#) that were originally published in August 2016. The guidance on delivering units, contained in these documents, is still valid for session 2017–18.

The guidance details temporary measures that were put in place to reduce the volume of assessment in session 2016–17. The unit thresholds detailed in this document can continue to be applied to both units in National Courses and freestanding SCQF level 5 units from session 2017–18 onwards.

National 4

How many physical activities does a candidate have to provide evidence for in the *Factors Impacting on Performance* unit?

While the context for learning can be provided by a range of physical activities, candidates must provide evidence for assessment from a minimum of **one** physical activity.

How many physical activities does a candidate have to provide evidence for in the *Performance Skills* unit?

While the context for learning can be provided by a range of physical activities, candidates must provide evidence for assessment from **two** activities. All assessment standards must be met for **each** of these physical activities (ie activity 1 and activity 2).

National 5

What is the structure of the National 5 Physical Education course?

Please see page 1 of the Course Specification on [SQA's subject page](#).

National 5 course assessment — portfolio

How many factors does the portfolio cover?

Within section 1 of the portfolio, all four factors, Mental, Emotional, Physical and Social will be assessed. In section 2 of the portfolio, candidates must select two factors to demonstrate their understanding of the performance development process.

What conditions should the portfolio be completed under?

Full details of the assessment conditions for the portfolio can be found in the course specification and the coursework assessment task. These documents are available on the subject page under the 'Coursework' heading.

Does the portfolio have to be completed under supervision?

Candidates must complete section 1 of the portfolio under a high degree of supervision and control. This means that candidates must be in direct sight of the assessor and cannot interact with any other candidates during the assessment.

For sections 2 and 3, the portfolio must be completed under some supervision and control. This means that candidates do not need to be directly supervised throughout the sessions.

When should I complete the portfolio?

The portfolio may be completed at any time during the course. Teachers and lecturers should decide when candidates have sufficient knowledge and skills to undertake the portfolio.

Where can I find the portfolio coursework assessment task?

Coursework assessment tasks that do not change annually can be found on SQA's subject pages. The portfolio coursework assessment task can be found on the National 5 Physical Education subject page under the 'Coursework' heading.

How should candidates complete the portfolio?

SQA has produced templates that candidates may use when submitting their physical education portfolio. These templates can be found on the National 5 Physical Education subject page under the 'Coursework' heading. More guidance is available in the [Producing and submitting Coursework](#) document.

What is the best way to complete the portfolio?

Teachers and lecturers should decide on the most suitable method to complete the portfolio. The templates are in Microsoft Word and/or PDF format. Candidates can either type or handwrite into these templates.

Does the portfolio need to be retained between sessions?

Yes, candidate work must be retained by the centre between sessions. If candidates complete the portfolio electronically the centre should select the most appropriate backup approach. For example, candidates could use a folder on the network which is secured by staff at the end of each classroom session.

What resources can a candidate use when completing the portfolio?

When completing section 1, candidates are not allowed access to any resources. For sections 2 & 3, there are no restrictions on the resources that the candidate may have access to but at no time should this include model answers or writing frames such as outlines or headings.

What feedback is acceptable when completing the portfolio?

Candidates must complete the assessment independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. During teaching and learning before the assessment has taken place, feedback would be given in order to encourage the candidate to do further work on their own to find the solution, rather than telling them exactly what they need to do to get the marks.

What must be attached to the portfolio template?

Candidates must attach a copy of the data they collected for both factors along with a copy of their personal development plan that they carried out during the course.

When does the portfolio need to be submitted to SQA?

The completed portfolio must be submitted to SQA for marking by the uplift date. Uplift dates can be found in the *SQA Guide for Co-ordinators 2017–18*.

National 5 course assessment — performance

How many activities are required for the course assessment?

The performance component assesses the candidate's ability to effectively perform in **two different** physical activities.

Do the two activities for the course assessment need to be different?

Yes. Candidates need to be assessed in two activities with significantly different movement and performance skills for their coursework to help ensure that the course assesses a breadth of skills, knowledge and understanding. Assessors will use their professional judgement as to what activities they consider would be appropriate in order to fulfil the criteria.

What activities are acceptable for the course assessment?

There are no mandatory physical activities prescribed in the National 5 Physical Education course. This promotes inclusion and enables personalisation and choice.

Clarification on acceptable activities for assessment can be found on the Physical Education [subject page](#) under the 'Guidance on activities' heading.

Can I still assess an activity not delivered within my centre?

Yes. To provide continued personalisation and choice candidates should be given every opportunity to develop activities for which they have a natural aptitude and which are of interest to them. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that sufficient assessor expertise exists to manage the assessment process and to assess candidate evidence.

Can a candidate be given a course assessment performance mark for more than two activities and their best scores submitted?

No. The performance for National 5 course assessment is two **single** performance events. The context of each performance must be challenging, competitive and/or demanding. Therefore evidence cannot be gathered over a series of different performance events.

How long should the candidate's performance last?

The performance has to be of sufficient length to allow candidates to demonstrate the required skills, so in most cases this would be whatever the norm is for the activity. For example, in some activities this would be a set period of play. In others, such as field events, it would be the number of attempts normally given, with decisions being taken and acted on between attempts and still within the duration of the performance.

How is the performance component assessed?

Each of the candidate's performances is assessed against specific criteria. The assessment criteria is described in the National 5 Coursework assessment task document which is available on the [Physical Education subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading.

What happens if a candidate does not attend their single performance events for reasons beyond their control, or if candidates are injured during their single performance events?

Guidance has been produced that outlines what centres should do if candidates do not attend their single performance event for reasons beyond their control, or if candidates are injured during their single performance event.

It is **not** for candidates who believe they have under-performed on the day.

This guidance is available on the [subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading.

Higher

What is the structure of the Higher Physical Education course?

Please see the Course Specification on [SQA's subject page](#).

Factors Impacting on Performance unit

What are the assessment conditions for the *Factors Impacting on Performance Unit*?

The assessment conditions for the *Factors Impacting on Performance Unit* can be found in the unit assessment support packs. These documents are available from SQA's secure website and can be accessed by your SQA Co-ordinator.

How many physical activities does a candidate have to provide evidence for in the *Factors Impacting on Performance unit*?

While the context for learning can be provided by a range of physical activities, candidates must provide evidence for assessment from a minimum of **one** physical activity.

Performance Skills unit

How many physical activities does a candidate have to provide evidence for in the Higher *Performance Skills Unit*?

While the context for learning can be provided by a range of physical activities, candidates must provide evidence for assessment from **two** activities. All assessment standards must be met for **each** of these physical activities (ie activity 1 and activity 2).

How is the *Performance Skills* unit verified?

Visiting verifiers will visit centres and observe a sample of candidates performing live in an agreed activity. The performance will be judged by both the assessor and the visiting verifier, with the results being compared. We are verifying the ability of assessors to make valid assessment judgements against the assessment standards.

Further information on quality assurance models, sample size etc, is available on the [Quality Assurance section of SQA's website](#).

Question paper

Where can I find definitions of the command words used?

You can find definitions of each command word on page 2 of the Marking Instructions for Higher PE question papers. The Marking Instructions can be found under the 'Past Papers and Marking Instructions' heading on the subject page.

Performance

Can a candidate be given a course assessment performance mark for more than one activity and their best score submitted?

No. The performance for Higher course assessment is a **single** performance event. The context of the performance must be challenging, competitive and/or demanding. Therefore evidence cannot be gathered over a series of different performance events.

How long should the candidate's performance last?

The performance has to be of sufficient length to allow candidates to demonstrate the required skills, so in most cases this would be whatever the norm is for the activity. For example, in some activities this would be a set period of play. In others, such as field events, it would be the number of attempts normally given, with decisions being taken and acted on between attempts and still within the duration of the performance.

Do candidates have to complete the planning and preparation, and evaluation sections of the performance coursework in relation to their single performance event?

Yes. The candidate must make their response personal, relate the planning to the upcoming single performance event and, after the performance, complete an evaluation of that performance.

What happens if a candidate does not attend their single performance event for reasons beyond their control, or if candidates are injured during their single performance event?

Guidance has been produced that outlines what centres should do if candidates do not attend their single performance event for reasons beyond their control, or if candidates are injured during their single performance event.

It is **not** for candidates who believe they have under-performed on the day.

This guidance is available on the [subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading.

Advanced Higher

What is the structure of the Advanced Higher Physical Education course?

Please see page 2 of the Course Specification on [SQA's subject page](#).

Performance Skills unit

How many physical activities does a candidate have to provide evidence for in the Advanced Higher *Performance Skills* unit?

While the context for learning can be provided by a range of physical activities, candidates must provide evidence for assessment from **one** activity. All assessment standards must be met for this physical activity.

How is the *Performance Skills* unit verified?

Visiting verifiers will visit centres and observe a sample of candidates performing live in an agreed activity. The performance will be judged by both the assessor and the visiting verifier, with the results being compared. We are verifying the ability of assessors to make valid assessment judgements against the Assessment Standards.

Further information on quality assurance models, sample size etc, is available on the [Quality Assurance section of SQA's website](#).

Course assessment

What is the mark allocation for each section of the project from session 2017/18?

The project has four stages and the marks available were altered slightly in three of the four stages after the 2017 exam diet.

Stage	Title	Mark allocation
1	Project proposal	22
2	Research	26
3	Performance development plan record	4
4	Post-PDP analysis and evaluation	18

National Qualification questions and answers can be found on the [frequently asked questions section](#) of SQA's website.