



# **Advanced Higher Geography**

---

## **Draft National Course Assessment Specification**

---



**Valid from August 2015**

This edition: December 2012, draft version 1.0

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

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2012

# Contents

<b>Course outline</b>	<b>1</b>
Course assessment structure	1
Equality and inclusion	1
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>2</b>
Course assessment	2
Added value	2
Grading	2
Structure and coverage of the Course assessment	4
Further information on possible Course coverage	6
<b>Administrative information</b>	<b>8</b>
History of changes to Course Assessment Specification	8

# Course outline

<b>Course title:</b>	Advanced Higher Geography
<b>SCQF level:</b>	7 (32 SCQF credit points)
<b>Course code:</b>	to be advised
<b>Course assessment code:</b>	to be advised

The purpose of the Course Assessment Specification is to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the Course assessment and the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed.

## Course assessment structure

Component 1 — question paper	marks to be confirmed
Component 2 — project	marks to be confirmed
<b>Total marks</b>	<b>marks to be confirmed</b>

This Course includes eight SCQF credit points to allow preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course.

## Equality and inclusion

This Course Assessment Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html).

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment of this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

# Assessment

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

## Course assessment

SQA will produce and give instructions for the production and conduct of Course assessments based on the information provided in this document.

## Added value

The purpose of the Course assessment is to assess added value of the Course as well as confirming attainment in the Course and providing a grade. The added value for the Course will 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 this Course assessment, added value will focus on the following:

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

This added value consists of:

- ◆ Drawing on, extending and applying the skills, knowledge and understanding the learner has acquired during the Course. This will be assessed by a question paper and a Coursework project.
- ◆ Demonstrating depth of knowledge and understanding and application of skills in the question paper.
- ◆ Demonstrating challenge and application in the Coursework project. This will demonstrate critical evaluation and independent research.

## Grading

Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

The Course assessment is graded A–D. The grade is determined on the basis of the total mark for all Course assessments together.

A learner's overall grade will be determined by their performance across the Course assessment.

### Grade description for C

For the award of Grade C, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

**Grade description for A**

For the award of Grade A, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

**Credit**

To take account of the extended range of learning and teaching approaches, remediation, consolidation of learning and integration needed for preparation for external assessment, six SCQF credit points are available in Courses at National 5 and Higher, and eight SCQF credit points in Courses at Advanced Higher. These points will be awarded when a Grade D or better is achieved.

Draft

## **Structure and coverage of the Course assessment**

The Course assessment will consist of two Components: a question paper and a Coursework project.

### **Component 1 — question paper**

The purpose of this question paper is to demonstrate knowledge and application of a wide range of geographical methods and techniques.

This question paper will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following higher-order cognitive skills and knowledge and understanding from the mandatory content of the Course:

- ◆ knowledge of a wide range of geographical skills and understanding of the different contexts in which they ought to be used
- ◆ application of a wide range of geographical methods and techniques including map skills, fieldwork skills, graphical techniques and a range of statistical techniques for analysing and interpreting geographical data

### **Component 2 — Coursework project**

The purpose of this project is to demonstrate challenge and application by demonstrating skills, knowledge and understanding through undertaking independent research and critical evaluation.

**The ratio of question paper to Coursework project and coverage in each is to be confirmed.**

## **Setting, conducting and marking of assessment**

### **Question paper**

This question paper will be set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. The duration of the question paper is to be confirmed.

### **Controlled assessment — Coursework project**

This project is:

- ◆ set by centres within SQA guidelines
- ◆ conducted under a low level of supervision and control
- ◆ completed in time to meet a submission date set by SQA
- ◆ produced independently by the learner
- ◆ submitted to SQA for external marking

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

SQA will provide a brief for the generation of evidence to be assessed.

## Further information on possible Course coverage

The following gives information about **possible** areas of skills, knowledge and understanding for the Advanced Higher Geography Course. Course assessment will involve sampling the skills, knowledge and understanding.

**Map interpretation:** the learner will be expected to demonstrate geographical skills and techniques using a range of maps and supplementary information in the form of a decision making exercise. 1:25,000 scale Ordnance Survey (OS) *Explorer Series* topographical sheets of England and Wales will be used. In addition to the OS map, supplementary information will be provided in the form of one or more of the following: maps, photographs, sketches or outline drawings, or drawings based on photographs, statistics, and data about the area.

The following is a **possible** list of skills and techniques which may be sampled:

- ◆ detailed interpretation and analysis of Ordnance Survey (OS) maps and related data
- ◆ use of OS maps and other data sources to aid decision making and problem solving

**Geographical data handling:** learners may be expected to process, interpret and analyse a given set of data, evaluate the technique used and evaluate the effectiveness of the practical application of these techniques.

The following is a **possible** list skills and techniques which may be sampled:

- ◆ sampling — random, systematic, stratified
- ◆ handling different data types — nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio
- ◆ descriptive statistics — measures of central tendency — mean, median, mode
- ◆ measures of dispersion — standard deviation
- ◆ introductory statistical testing — nearest neighbour, chi squared, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient, linear regression
- ◆ Reilly's gravity law
- ◆ use of statistical techniques in order to explain geographical relationships

**Fieldwork techniques:** the learner will explore issues which relate to the practical application of fieldwork gathering techniques and the analysis of data which might be obtained as a result of using those techniques.

The following is a **possible** list of skills and techniques which may be sampled:

a) Physical topics:

- ◆ morphological mapping which may include GPS
- ◆ vegetation sampling
- ◆ stream analysis
- ◆ weather recording
- ◆ soil profiles and characteristics
- ◆ pebble analysis — size, shape and rock type
- ◆ use of secondary sources which may include maps and GIS

b) Human topics:

- ◆ rural land use mapping which may include GPS
- ◆ urban land use mapping which may include GPS
- ◆ traffic and pedestrian surveys
- ◆ environmental quality surveys
- ◆ questionnaire design and implementation
- ◆ use of secondary sources which may include maps and GIS

Statistical formulae will be given and calculators may be used. An atlas must be provided by the centre for each learner for use in the examination. It should be suitable for use at this level and be of a general type (ie not devoted to one region or purely thematic). Centres are responsible for ensuring that atlases used are clean copies and contain no additional material. Learners must provide the title of the atlas used.

### **Component 2 — project**

Coursework **may** include the following:

**Geographical Study** — the learner is required to demonstrate the ability to undertake a structured field study of a geographical nature which uses primary and/or secondary sources and which uses a variety of appropriate presentation skills to report the findings.

**Geographical Issue** — the learner is required to demonstrate the ability to carry out a critical evaluation of a geographical issue by identifying different viewpoints, from at least three sources, about the issue and writing an essay which synthesises these viewpoints in a way that allows a valid conclusion to be drawn.

# Administrative information

---

**Published:** December 2012 (draft version 1.0)

**Superclass:** to be advised

---

## History of changes to Course Assessment Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2012

This specification may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies of this Unit can be downloaded from SQA's website at [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

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.