

Controlled Assessment



Controlled assessment is SQA's approach to developing assessments (setting), the conditions of assessment (conducting), and marking assessments (marking) for the Added Value Unit at National 4 and the Course assessment at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher.

SQA is introducing controlled assessment for non-question paper components of the Added Value Unit and new National Courses at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher.

Controlled assessment is designed to ensure that:

- assessment is valid, reliable, and fair
- assessment is manageable for learners, teachers/lecturers and centres
- assessment methods are consistently applied for all learners

Levels of control

SQA will work in partnership with centres to establish three levels of control around setting, conducting and marking assessments. These are:

◆ SQA-led activity

Where SQA sets and marks the assessments and sets tightly-controlled conditions for assessment.

◆ Shared responsibility between SQA and centres

An example of this is where centres set and mark assessments using exemplification and/or guidance provided by SQA, and the assessments are conducted under some supervision and control; as specified by SQA.

◆ Centre-led

Where centres have flexibility in how to set and mark the assessment, and determine what the conditions of assessment should be, in line with broad subject-specific guidance and overall policies and procedures laid down by SQA

All assessment activity is quality assured by SQA. Where responsibility is shared or centre-led, centres also have a responsibility to have internal verification systems in place to ensure quality and consistency at all stages of the process. This will be externally verified by SQA.

Expected levels of control for Courses at National 4 to Advanced Higher

National 4 Added Value Unit Specifications and Course Assessment Specifications for National 5 and above describe the level of control applied to each assessment. The levels of control normally used for each level are:

National 4

For the Added Value Unit at National 4, we would expect setting, conducting and marking to be a shared responsibility between SQA and centres. For example, SQA will provide exemplification of assessment approaches and instructions on how to judge/mark evidence. SQA sets out requirements for the conditions for conducting assessments, but there is some flexibility for centres.

During the first two years of the new National Qualifications, in sessions 2013/14 and 2014/15, SQA Added Value Unit assessments will be set by SQA.

National 5 and Higher

The majority of non-question paper components of Course assessment at National 5 and Higher will be set and marked by SQA, except where shared responsibility in setting and/or marking is more appropriate for the subject. For example, in practical assessments where it would not be feasible to transport the evidence, the assessment would be marked by the centre and quality assured by SQA.

Advanced Higher

At Advanced Higher, because there is greater emphasis on learner autonomy, a greater degree of flexibility will be needed. More components are likely to be set or marked on a shared basis — for example, an assignment in which SQA sets broad requirements but where the actual topic is negotiated between the teacher and the learner.