

## Physics

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This update contains information on any recent updates to documents for your subject along with further information and guidance.

I hope you find this information helpful, and please contact me if you have any questions.

**Andy Shield**  
Qualifications Manager

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## The Qualifications Team

**Andy Shield**  
Qualifications Manager

**Sheron Ross**  
Qualifications Officer

## Subject Review Report

The development and implementation of the whole suite of National Qualifications has been a huge programme of work dating from 2010 and included many stakeholders. As part of the review and evaluation of this programme, SQA has been engaging with teachers and lecturers on an ongoing basis, as well as gathering intelligence from the awarding and verification process. As a result of this work, SQA has created subject reports to give teachers and lecturers an insight into our planned incremental changes and further areas of investigation for each subject. Each report identifies the key issues for that subject and an associated action plan. Find out more information and what this means for your subject [here](#).

## Planned changes to documents in session 2016/17

We have put in place an agreed schedule of planned changes to documents for National Qualifications in session 2016/17.

Publication date	Documents
End of April 2016	Course Specifications, Course Assessment Specifications and Unit Specifications
End of May 2016	Course and Unit Support Notes
End of August 2016	Unit assessment support packs
End of September 2016	Coursework assessment tasks, specimen question papers and exemplar question papers

This schedule takes into account any necessary changes that are identified as a result of verification activities, the exam diet and feedback received from centres throughout the current session. It is anticipated that additional, critical changes may be identified for some subjects following the grade boundary meetings which take place during the summer months. Where such changes are identified, we will make further updates and publish these documents by the following dates:

Publication date	Documents
End of August 2016	Course Specifications, Course Assessment Specifications and Unit Specifications (further critical changes only)
End of September 2016	Course and Unit Support Notes (further critical changes only)

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## Changes to documents in April and May 2016

Please ensure that you read the following updated documents in preparation for session 2016/17. To help you quickly and easily identify what has been updated, for every updated mandatory document we have also published a comparison document that clearly illustrates the changes.

These are published alongside the updated documents on our subject pages at [www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects)

The Notification of Changes spreadsheets have also been updated to reflect the latest changes to documents. You can view these spreadsheets at [www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjectchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjectchanges)

### Higher documents

#### Course and Unit Support Notes

The following amendments have been made to the Higher Physics Course and Unit Support Notes:

##### *Researching Physics* — Outcome 1

- Clarification that candidates can work in small groups but each candidate must show that they have individually met the Assessment Standard.

##### Combining assessments across Units

- Transfer of evidence for Outcome 1 has been amended. Evidence of achievement of Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 in the Higher *Researching Physics* Unit can be used as evidence of the achievement of Outcome 1 in the *Our Dynamic Universe*, *Particles and Waves*, and *Electricity* Units of Higher. There is no requirement to match Assessment Standards. However, the achievement of Outcome 1 in the *Our Dynamic Universe*, *Particles and Waves*, and *Electricity* Units of Higher cannot be used as evidence of the achievement of Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 in the Higher *Researching Physics* Unit.

### Advanced Higher documents

#### Course and Unit Support Notes

The following amendments have been made to the Advanced Higher Physics Course and Unit Support Notes:

##### Working with others section

- 'The Project, including the practical work, must be the individual work of the candidate and not group work' has been added.

##### Unit assessment section

- Reference to group work has been removed as only the practical work not related to the Project can be carried out by candidates working in groups.
  - Reference to extended response essay-type questions has been removed as these do not apply to Advanced Higher Physics.
  - Clarification added that assessment conditions must still be adhered to for naturally occurring evidence.
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Preparation for Course assessment section

- Reference to General assessment information and Course assessment task documents added.

*Investigating Physics* section

- Reference to precision added.

## Further information and guidance

### Verification Key Messages

Key messages from round 1 of verification in session 2015/16 are available from the relevant subject pages of our website at [www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects). You can access them from the 'Verification and Course Reports' heading in the Assessment Support section.

Key messages from round 2 will be published over the summer.

### Looking ahead to session 2016/17

#### Understanding Standards programme

Our Understanding Standards programme will continue in session 2016/17 when we will publish more candidate evidence and commentary materials. We will also deliver a series of Understanding Standards events on Course assessment. In addition to this, throughout the session we will gather and publish assessment case studies to share good practice in assessment.

To access candidate evidence and commentaries for externally assessed Components of Course assessment, visit [www.understandingstandards.org.uk](http://www.understandingstandards.org.uk)

Candidate evidence and commentaries for Units and internally assessed Components of Course assessment are available from our secure website.

For more information on Understanding Standards, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/understandingstandards](http://www.sqa.org.uk/understandingstandards)

#### Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training

We are still offering free CPD training for teachers and lecturers, where particular areas of concern are identified which are not addressed by the Understanding Standards programme. This CPD support is subject-specific and is tailored to cover one or more qualification levels according to requirements.

Where there is sufficient demand, we may deliver CPD training through online webinars and, where appropriate, publish the recordings and related materials on our website after the webinar has taken place.

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## Stay informed

### Subscribe to our newsletters

We currently issue two key newsletters for teachers and lecturers:

- Centre News (weekly)
- New National Qualifications update (monthly)

Both of these newsletters contain the latest news and updates for the National Qualifications. Centre News also includes subject-specific news and a regular reminder of key dates during the session.

To subscribe to our newsletters, visit <http://mailer.sqa.org.uk>

### Visit your subject pages

Make sure you regularly visit your subject pages, where you can access documents and assessment support materials for your Courses, Verification Key Messages and information on Coursework. You will also find the latest news updates for your Courses in the 'Updates and announcements' section.

Visit [www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects)

### Sign up to MyAlerts

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YouTube: [SQAonline](https://www.youtube.com/SQAonline)

#### Contact us

For centre enquiries, please contact our Customer Support Team:

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