

## Biology



This update focuses on the development of Advanced Higher, with information relevant to your subject and details of the support available to you.

Updates regarding National 3 to National 5 and Higher can be found in the 'Updates and Announcements' section of the relevant **subject pages**. I would encourage you to make regular use of our subject pages, where you will find support documents, answers to common questions, and links to other areas of interest. You can also sign up for 'My Alerts', SQA's e-mail update service, that notifies you whenever content you are interested in is added or updated on SQA's website. Visit **[www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts](http://www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts)** to register.

I hope you find the following update helpful, and please contact me if you have any questions.

**Alison Plummer**  
Qualifications Development Manager

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## The Qualifications Development Team

**Alison Plummer**  
Qualifications Development Manager

**Gordon Shaw**  
Qualifications Development Consultant

**Judy Wasige**  
Qualifications Development Officer

## Assessment support

Package 1 of Unit assessment support for Advanced Higher is available now from SQA's secure website. You can arrange access to secure materials through your SQA Co-ordinator; these must be stored securely and treated as confidential.

Over the coming year, we will publish the following assessment support materials for Advanced Higher Courses:

<b>January 2015</b>	Course Comparison document Guidance on the use of past papers
<b>February 2015</b>	Specimen Question Paper and Marking Instructions Unit assessment support package 2
<b>March 2015</b>	Coursework information
<b>April 2015</b>	Unit assessment support package 3
<b>December 2015</b>	Exemplar Question Paper and Marking Instructions

## Updates to documents

We will make planned updates to the Advanced Higher documents, following the publication of Advanced Higher Specimen Question Papers, coursework information and Unit assessment support packs. We will also finalise package 1 of Unit assessment support, following the publication of packages 2 and 3.

The schedule for publishing the updated documents is as follows:

<b>April 2015</b>	Mandatory documents (Unit Specifications, Course Specifications and Course Assessment Specifications)
<b>May 2015</b>	Advice and guidance documents (Course and Unit Support Notes) and Unit assessment support packs

These updates are to ensure consistency between the assessment support materials, advice and guidance documents and the documents containing mandatory information.

The Notification of Changes spreadsheet will be updated for Advanced Higher following the publication of any revised documents.

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## Planned changes to Advanced Higher Biology documents:

<b>Course Specification</b>	Minor changes to wording for consistency with other documents.
<b>Course Assessment Specification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The mark allocation of the two Components will change: the Question Paper will be 90 marks and the Project will be 30 marks.</li><li>• The Project mark criteria are currently being finalised.</li><li>• The mandatory content is currently being reviewed. Some information currently in the Exemplification of key areas of the Course and Unit Support Notes will be moved to mandatory content.</li></ul>
<b>Unit Specifications:</b> <i>Biology: Cells and Proteins</i> <i>Biology: Organisms and Evolution</i>	<b>Outcome 1</b> Minor changes to wording of Assessment Standards.  <b>Outcome 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assessment Standard 2.1 will be reworded to 'Making accurate statements and giving clear descriptions/explanations'.</li><li>• Assessment Standards 2.2 and 2.3 to be removed.</li><li>• Assessment Standard 2.4 will therefore become 2.2.</li><li>• new Assessment Standard 2.2 — 'selecting information' to be removed from problem solving types.</li></ul>
<b>Transfer of Evidence — all Units</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Both Outcome 1 and Assessment Standard 2. 2 will only need to be achieved once in any of the following Units of this Course: <i>Biology: Cells and Proteins</i> or <i>Biology: Organisms and Evolution</i>.</li><li>• Outcome 1 in the Investigative Biology Unit of this Course will be able to be used as evidence of the achievement of Outcome 1 in the <i>Biology: Cells and Proteins</i> or <i>Biology: Organisms and Evolution</i> Units of this Course.</li></ul>
<b>Course and Unit Support Notes</b>	The mandatory content is currently being reviewed. Some information currently in the Exemplification of key areas of the Course and Unit Support Notes will be moved to mandatory content.

***It is important that staff delivering the new Advanced Higher Courses in session 2015-16 read the full suite of documents for their subjects, as well as those relating to assessment. We also advise staff attending the Advanced Higher support events to read these documents in preparation.***

***For more information on documents and assessment support materials, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments](http://www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments)***

## Support and guidance

Unit assessment support package 2 for all Units, similar to package 1, will take a Unit-by-Unit approach and provide an additional set of questions and guidance for candidates and assessors for relevant Outcomes.

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## Looking ahead to 2015–16

The new Advanced Higher Courses go live from August 2015. SQA will continue to work closely with centres throughout the implementation of these Courses to ensure you have the support you need to prepare your learners for assessment.

We will also work closely with centres during the verification process to identify exemplar materials for Advanced Higher that can be shared with you, to help enhance your understanding of the standards required.

A series of implementation events for Biology will take place on the following dates:

- 3 March 2015 (Glasgow)
- 10 March 2015 (Stirling)
- 17 March 2015 (Inverness)
- 24 March 2015 (Aberdeen)
- 30 March 2015 (Edinburgh)

If you wish to attend any of these events, please follow this [link](#).

### Contact SQA

For centre enquiries, please contact our Business Development and Customer Support Team on:

**Tel:** 0303 333 0330

**Fax:** 0354 213 5000

**E-mail enquiries:** [mycentre@sqa.org.uk](mailto:mycentre@sqa.org.uk)

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