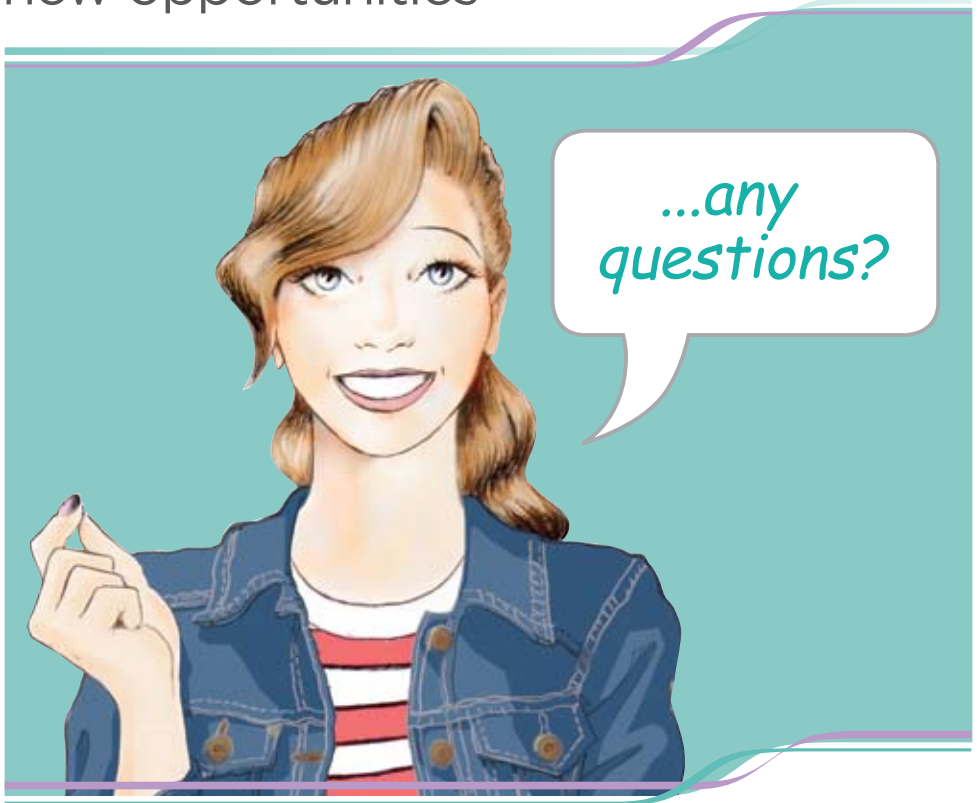


# New qualifications — new opportunities



“The new **National 1 to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher** qualifications are now available across Scotland. I’m here to give you all the information you need to get the most from Scotland’s new qualifications.”

**SAM**

it can  
be done  **SQA**



*You're probably asking why the old qualifications had to change. It's a fair question.*

The new National Qualifications are designed not just to keep pace with the modern world, but to put you ahead of the pack. They're designed to reward the skills, knowledge and experience you gain as you learn – they highlight what you can do as well as what you know and they show that your skills, knowledge and understanding meet national standards.

They also take into account that different people learn in different ways and perform at their best in different tasks, so they use a variety of assessment methods. There's now more assessment through things like practical activities, assignments and projects.

All the while, the new qualifications remain as credible and trusted as you would expect an SQA qualification to be. So whatever you go on to do, your qualifications will be recognised and respected.

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PS: Give me a shout on Twitter [@MYSQA\\_SAM](https://twitter.com/MYSQA_SAM) or Facebook at [www.facebook.com/MYSQA.SAM](https://www.facebook.com/MYSQA.SAM)  
I'm also on The Student Room as [MYSQA](https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/showthread.php?p=1)



## How are my new qualifications different?

Your new National Qualifications are more practical. They focus more on developing skills, including practical skills, critical-thinking skills, research and investigation skills, essay writing skills and independent study skills. This means you're better prepared for what's up ahead.

At the same time, your new qualifications are more personal. They recognise that no two people learn or perform at their best in exactly the same way. So your National Qualifications will reward your strengths, your hard work and your skills – both in and out of the classroom.

### What's changed?

Here's how your new National Qualifications relate to previous National Qualifications.

SCQF level	Previous National Qualifications	Replaced by	New National Qualifications
1 and 2	Access 1 and Access 2	▶	National 1 and National 2
3	Access 3 Standard Grade (Foundation level)	▶	National 3
4	Standard Grade (General level) Intermediate 1	▶	National 4
5	Standard Grade (Credit level) Intermediate 2	▶	National 5
6	Higher	▶	Higher (new)
7	Advanced Higher	▶	Advanced Higher (new)

Find out more about your National Qualifications, and how they compare with other SQA qualifications on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) at [www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner](http://www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner)

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## How do they work?

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All new National Courses include Units (areas of study) that you'll be taught throughout the year. Your teacher or lecturer will assess each Unit as a pass or fail, based on work you'll do in class. The information below shows how the new qualifications are assessed, and where they can take you.

### National 1 Units

- These are assessed as a pass or fail by your teacher or lecturer.

They could lead to National 2 Courses, other National 1 Units, or Awards at SCQF level 1 or 2.

### National 2 Courses

- These are made up of Units.
- They're assessed a pass or fail by your teacher or lecturer.
- You need to pass all Units to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to the related course at National 3, other National 2 Units or Courses, or Awards at SCQF level 2 or 3.

### National 3 Courses

- These are made up of Units.
- They're assessed as a pass or fail by your teacher or lecturer.
- You need to pass all Units to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to the related course at National 4, other National 3 Units or Courses, Awards at SCQF level 3 or 4, National Certificates (NCs), National Progression Awards (NPAs) or employment opportunities.

## How do they work? (continued)

### National 4 Courses

- These are made up of Units, including an Added Value Unit that involves a test or coursework (assignments, practical activities and so on) and assesses your overall performance across the course.
- They're assessed as a pass or fail by your teacher or lecturer.
- You need to pass all Units, including the Added Value Unit, to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to the related course at National 5, other National 4 Units or Courses, Awards at SCQF level 4 or 5, National Certificates (NCs), National Progression Awards (NPAs), Modern Apprenticeships or other employment opportunities.

### National 5 Courses

- These are made up of Units and a Course assessment.
- They're graded A to D or 'no award'.
- The Course assessment involves a question paper (exam) or coursework (assignments, practical activities and so on), or both — most of which we will mark externally. In some subjects, your teacher or lecturer will mark your coursework.
- You need to pass all Units plus the Course assessment to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to the related course at Higher, other National 5 Units or Courses, Awards at SCQF level 5 or 6, National Certificates (NCs), National Progression Awards (NPAs), Modern Apprenticeships or other employment opportunities.



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## How do they work? (continued)

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### Higher Courses

- These are made up of Units and a Course assessment.
- They're graded A to D or 'no award'.
- The Course assessment involves a question paper (exam) or coursework (assignments, practical activities and so on), or both — most of which we will mark externally. In some subjects, your teacher or lecturer will mark your coursework.
- You need to pass all Units plus the Course assessment to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to the related course at Advanced Higher, other Higher Courses, Scottish Baccalaureates, National Certificates (NCs), National Progression Awards (NPAs), Higher National Certificate (HNC) or Higher National Diploma (HND) Courses, an undergraduate degree, technical apprenticeships or other employment opportunities.

### Advanced Higher Courses

- These are made up of Units and a Course assessment.
- They're graded A to D or 'no award'.
- The Course assessment involves a question paper (exam) or coursework (assignments, practical activities and so on), or both — most of which we will mark externally. In some subjects, your teacher or lecturer will mark your coursework.
- You need to pass all Units plus the Course assessment to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to a Higher National Diploma (HND) Course, an undergraduate degree or employment opportunities.

To find out more about how the new qualifications are assessed, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/cfeassessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfeassessment)

## What types of skills will I develop?

As well as subject-based skills, you'll develop Skills for Learning, Life and Work (SfLLW). These are:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Health and wellbeing
- Employability, enterprise and citizenship
- Thinking skills

Some new National Courses have Core Skills that will automatically be recognised on your qualifications certificate, such as Communication and Problem Solving.

Find out more at [www.sqa.org.uk/sfllw](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sfllw) and [www.sqa.org.uk/coreskills](http://www.sqa.org.uk/coreskills)

### Literacy and numeracy

Although you'll develop literacy and numeracy skills across your subjects, we've also introduced new National Units in Literacy and Numeracy that will be recognised on your qualifications certificate.

Find out more at [www.sqa.org.uk/literacyandnumeracy](http://www.sqa.org.uk/literacyandnumeracy)

If you're disabled or have additional support needs, a wide range of support is allowed to help you complete your National Literacy Units. Visit [www.sqa.org.uk/literacysupportforlearners](http://www.sqa.org.uk/literacysupportforlearners) for more information.

### What if I have additional support needs, or I'm disabled?

An assessment arrangement can be made for you in your assessments or exams (or both). For example, we may arrange for you to type on a laptop rather than write by hand.

Find out more at [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements)



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## How do I prepare for the new qualifications?

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The good news is, loads of help is available.

*"Below I've listed the study resources I think you'll find most useful."*

### 1. Specimen question papers

These are brilliant because they show you what your exams are going to look like. You'll see how they're structured and what they ask you to do. Find them for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher at [www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjects)

### 2. Exemplar question papers

These contain updated past paper questions. They're available for Higher, and we'll publish Advanced Higher Exemplar question papers in December 2015. Find them at [www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjects)

### 3. Past papers

These are great for testing your knowledge. If you're using older past papers, remember to give your teacher or lecturer a shout as they can tell you the questions that are most useful to you. Find them at [www.sqa.org.uk/pastpapers](http://www.sqa.org.uk/pastpapers)

### 4. General assessment information

Information on the coursework you'll do as part of the Course assessment at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. Find it at [www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjects)

### 5. Exam tools

This is a seriously helpful part of our website. Use it to get the exam timetable, create your own personalised exam timetable, and get organised with a study plan. Find it at [www.sqa.org.uk/examtools](http://www.sqa.org.uk/examtools)

### 6. BBC Bitesize

Free interactive revision help for the new National Qualifications. Visit [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize)

### 7. Young Scot

Great for information and advice. Includes revision and stress-busting tips too. Visit [www.youngscot.org](http://www.youngscot.org)

### 8. Revision in a nutshell

The National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS) has produced handy revision guides that include links to useful websites and other online resources. Find them at [www.npfs.org.uk](http://www.npfs.org.uk)

### 9. Hodder Education revision materials

These include model question papers for new National Qualifications. Visit [www.hoddereducation.co.uk](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk)



## Awards, Scottish Baccalaureates and vocational qualifications

### Awards

We've developed new Awards which recognise wider achievement. These Awards take into account the life and work skills you've gained from activities you may already be doing at school, college or elsewhere - such as mentoring, voluntary work or fundraising.

See the full range of our Awards at [www.sqa.org.uk/awards](http://www.sqa.org.uk/awards)

### Scottish Baccalaureates

Scottish Baccalaureates are qualifications at SCQF level 7, available to learners in S5 and S6. There are Scottish Baccalaureates in Expressive Arts, Languages, Science, and Social Sciences.

Find out more at [www.sqa.org.uk/baccalaureates](http://www.sqa.org.uk/baccalaureates)

### Skills for Work Courses

These courses are all about getting to know the demands and expectations of the world of work. There are lots of courses, covering everything from beauty to construction, and health to hospitality.

Take a look at [www.sqa.org.uk/skillsforwork](http://www.sqa.org.uk/skillsforwork)

### National Progression Awards (NPAs) and National Certificates (NCs)

NPAs and NCs prepare you for employment, career development or studying at Higher National Certificate (HNC) or Higher National Diploma (HND) level. Both assess your skills and knowledge in specialist work-based areas and are available in lots of subjects, such as Business and Marketing or Engineering.

You'll find more information at [www.sqa.org.uk/hpa](http://www.sqa.org.uk/hpa)



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## Any other questions?

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### Will I sit prelims?

It's up to your school or college. Prelims aren't part of how the new qualifications are assessed, however schools or colleges may still choose to have them.

### What happens if I receive a fail or 'no award' result?

You'll still get SCQF credit points for any Units you've passed. You'll find them on the Record of Attainment section of your qualifications certificate pack.

### What about appeals?

The old Appeals Service has been replaced by two new Results Services.

The new Results Services are:

- Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service
- Post-results Service

To find out more, visit

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



If you fall short of achieving the National 5 course assessment, a new arrangement called *Recognising Positive Achievement* means you could achieve the qualification at National 4 instead. We've published guidance for schools and colleges on these arrangements. If you'd like more information on how they work, your teacher or lecturer can tell you more.

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## Who can I talk to about my National Qualifications?

If you have a teacher, lecturer, parent or carer that you can talk to, why not chat about your qualifications with them? We've been providing support and information to schools and colleges throughout the development of the new qualifications, and we've also published information for parents and carers so they know what's happening too.

### We've been keeping everyone in the loop

We're making sure schools, colleges, universities and employers are bang up to date with our National Qualifications. Scottish Universities will consider both new and existing National Qualifications in their entry requirements. Most Scottish universities have also published statements that outline their position regarding the new qualifications. For more information visit [www.sqa.org.uk/cfeforlearners](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfeforlearners)



## Online help and information

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Remember, for help, advice and any questions you have about your National Qualifications, you'll find me on Twitter: [@MYSQA\\_SAM](#) and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/MYSQA.SAM](http://www.facebook.com/MYSQA.SAM) where I also post regular study and exam tips to help you through your revision.

You can also subscribe to our YouTube channel, [SQAonline](#)



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

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