

## Biology, Human Biology and Science



This update contains information relevant to your subject and details of the support available to you.

We also publish updates on the new National Courses 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.

**Jonathan Gillies**  
Qualifications Manager

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## The Qualifications Team

**Jonathan Gillies**  
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## Documents and assessment support materials

Assessment support materials are now available for the new National 3 to Advanced Higher Qualifications, marking a significant milestone. It is important that you read the full suite of documents for your Course, as well as those relating to assessment.

Further information on documents and assessment support materials can be found at [www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments](http://www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments)

### Updates to documents

#### National 3 to Higher documents

We updated some mandatory documents in April. One major change is the removal of Assessment Standards 2.2 and 2.3 from the National 5 Biology **Unit Specifications**. Based on considerable stakeholder feedback, removal of these Assessment Standards will reduce the assessment burden at National 5 and allow more contact time between teachers/lecturers and candidates and enable them to cover the Course content in line with Curriculum for Excellence principles. Updated **Unit Specifications** for the following are available now:

- *Cell Biology* H207 75
- *Biology: Multicellular Organisms* H208 75
- *Biology: Life on Earth* H209 75

The remaining changes to the documents are relatively minor; however, have been made in order to clarify wording and ensure consistency of wording.

Updated **Unit Specifications** are also available now for Biology National 3 — *Cell Biology* and *Biology: Life on Earth* — and for all National 4 Units. Comparison documents are available for updated National 3 and National 4 **Unit Specifications**.

The Higher Biology **Unit Specification** for *Biology: Sustainability and Interdependence* has also been updated, as have the Higher Human Biology **Unit Specifications** for *Human Biology: Physiology and Health* and *Human Biology: Neurobiology and Communication*.

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Updated **Course Assessment Specifications** are available now for Higher Biology and Higher Human Biology and the former is accompanied by a comparison document.

Comparison documents clearly illustrate what changes have been made and will help you to quickly and easily identify the updates. Comparison documents are available from the **subject pages** and sit alongside the 'clean' versions of the updated documents.

An overview of the changes to the mandatory documents for Biology and Human Biology is provided below:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Document</b>	<b>Change</b>
Biology	National 3	Unit Specifications: <i>Cell Biology; Biology: Life on Earth</i>	Consistency of wording of mandatory key areas.
Biology	National 4	Unit Specifications: <i>Cell Biology; Biology: Life on Earth; Biology: Multicellular Organisms</i>	Consistency of wording of mandatory key areas.
Biology	National 4	Added Value Unit	Minor amendments to clarify wording.
Biology	National 5	Unit Specifications: <i>Cell Biology; Biology: Life on Earth; Biology: Multicellular Organisms</i>	Removal of Assessment Standards 2.2 and 2.3; consistency of wording of mandatory key areas.
Biology	Higher	Unit Specification: <i>Biology: Sustainability and Interdependence</i>	Consistency of wording of mandatory key areas.
Biology	Higher	Course Assessment Specification	Minor amendments to mandatory knowledge to aid understanding.
Biology	Higher	Course Specification	Consistency of wording of mandatory key areas.
Human Biology	Higher	Unit Specifications: <i>Human Biology: Physiology and Health; Human Biology: Neurobiology and Communication</i>	Consistency of wording of mandatory key areas.
Human Biology	Higher	Course Assessment Specification	Updates to 'Division & Differentiation in human cells' section due to scientific developments.

Where required, **Course and Unit Support Notes** will be updated to correspond with these changes. Updated **Course and Unit Support Notes** will be published by the end of May 2015. Unit assessment support packs for National 3 to Higher Biology and Higher Human Biology will be updated and published on SQA's secure site by the end of August 2015. The purpose of these updates is to provide further clarification based on feedback received from practitioners.

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

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## Advanced Higher documents

SQA has published planned updates to Advanced Higher documents. This follows the publication of Advanced Higher Specimen Question Papers, Coursework information and Unit assessment support packs. The updated Advanced Higher **Unit Specifications**, **Course Specifications** and **Course Assessment Specifications** are available now.

The Advanced Higher **Course and Unit Support Notes** and all packages of Advanced Higher **Unit assessment support** will be updated by the end of May 2015.

The draft Advanced Higher **Unit Specifications** were originally published in 2013. Following feedback and development of assessment support material, changes were required to **Unit Specifications**. The following changes have been made to the Advanced Higher *Biology: Cells and Proteins* and *Biology: Organisms and Evolution* **Unit Specifications**:

- Outcome 1 has had minor changes to wording of Assessment Standards.
- Outcome 2:
  - Assessment Standard 2.1 has been reworded to 'Making accurate statements and giving clear descriptions/explanations'.
  - Assessment Standards 2.2 and 2.3 have been removed.
  - Assessment Standard 2.4 therefore becomes 2.2.
  - In new Assessment Standard 2.2, 'selecting information' has been removed from problem solving types.

## Transfer of evidence

Since the Outcomes and Assessment Standards are the same for the *Biology: Cells and Proteins* and *Biology: Organisms and Evolution* Units of the Course, the Units differing only by context, evidence for Outcome 1 and Assessment Standard 2.2 for one of these Units in this Course can be used as evidence of the achievement of Outcome 1 and Assessment Standard 2.2 in the other of these Units of this Course.

The achievement of Outcome 1 in the *Investigative Biology* Unit of this Course can be used as evidence of the achievement of Outcome 1 in the *Biology: Cells and Proteins* and the *Biology: Organisms and Evolution* Units of this Course. There is no requirement to match Assessment Standards. However, the achievement of Outcome 1 in the *Biology: Cells and Proteins* or the *Biology: Organisms and Evolution* Units of this Course cannot be used as evidence of the achievement of Outcome 1 in the *Investigative Biology* Unit of this Course.

Further details of changes to Advanced Higher Biology documents are outlined in the **January 2015 subject update**. The Notification of Changes spreadsheets for Advanced Higher documents have been published and you can view these at:  
**[www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges)**

## Advanced Higher Exemplar Question Papers

In December 2015, we will publish Exemplar Question Papers for all new Advanced Higher Courses that include a question paper as part of the Course assessment. Further information on Exemplar Question Papers, and other available assessment support materials, can be found at **[www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments](http://www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments)**

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## Support and guidance

SSERC have recently produced another resource which provides possible starting points for the Higher Assignment and the opportunity to use aspects of the resource for assignment work is highlighted. The Genetic Dilemmas resource, which has been revised with support from SQA, is now available on the [SSERC website](#).

Although this resource relates to Higher Human Biology there is also a possibility of it linking to the Higher Biology Unit: *Biology: DNA and the Genome*.

As communicated previously in the [Common Questions](#) document, the other resources produced for Higher Biology and Higher Human Biology are available via the following links:

- [http://www.sserc.org.uk/images/Biology/Higher Biol/SQA/Production Microorganisms.pdf](http://www.sserc.org.uk/images/Biology/Higher%20Biol/SQA/Production%20Microorganisms.pdf)
- <http://www.sserc.org.uk/index.php/component/content/article/1020-uncategorised/3869-photosynthesis-food-production-and-turbocharging?highlight=WyJ0dXJib2NoYXJnaW5nII0=>
- [http://www.sserc.org.uk/images/Biology/Higher Human/SQA/Diabetes final.pdf](http://www.sserc.org.uk/images/Biology/Higher%20Human/SQA/Diabetes_final.pdf)
- [http://www.sserc.org.uk/images/Biology/Higher Human/SQA/Ebola final.pdf](http://www.sserc.org.uk/images/Biology/Higher%20Human/SQA/Ebola_final.pdf)

## Looking ahead to 2015/16

### Understanding Standards

In June 2015, we will publish further Understanding Standards packs for National 3 to Higher, which will contain candidate evidence and commentaries for Unit assessment and internally assessed components of Course assessment.

The Understanding Standards programme will continue throughout session 2015/16, and will include Nominee training events, Understanding Standards events for Higher, and Understanding Standards packs. Relevant Understanding Standards packs and prior verified assessments will be reviewed in due course.

Nominee training events for Biology, Human Biology, and Science will take place on Wednesday 23 September 2015.

A Nominee training event for Advanced Higher Biology will take place on Tuesday 19 January 2016.

Understanding Standards events for Higher Biology and Human Biology will take place towards the end of 2015.

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

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## Continuing Professional Development support

We will continue to offer subject-specific CPD support for new National Courses, where particular areas of concern are identified that are not already addressed by the Understanding Standards programme.

From August 2015, we will also offer subject-specific CPD support to assist teachers and lecturers with the implementation of the new Advanced Higher Courses.

## Use of National 4 Added Value Units

From August 2015 onwards, you will have the option of developing your own National 4 Added Value Unit assessments for use with candidates. Please note that this is not a requirement and you can continue to use SQA-produced Added Value Unit assessments until further notice. Most SQA-produced Added Value Unit assessments already allow considerable flexibility in the choice of a context for the assessment, while some provide a context that you can change.

Further information can be found at [www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment)

### Contact SQA

For centre enquiries, please contact our Customer Support Team:

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