

Accounting, Administration and IT, Business, Business Management and Economics

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Changes to assessment at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher

As announced by the Deputy First Minister in September 2016, units and unit assessments are being removed from National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses on a phased basis over three years:

- National 5 from 2017–18
- Higher from 2018–19
- Advanced Higher from 2019–20

For more information, including a Q&A on the implications of these changes, please visit our website at www.sqa.org.uk/nqchanges

Units that were previously part of National 5 courses

The units that were previously part of National 5 courses are now freestanding units at SCQF level 5. They can no longer be used to contribute to the achievement of a National 5 course.

We will remove all references to National 5 courses from the unit specifications, unit support notes and unit assessment support packs in due course, and the unit support notes will be added to the

unit specifications as an appendix. The unit specifications will also be relocated to a new freestanding units web page for each subject.

Further information on the timescales for this will be provided in our weekly Centre News newsletter.

Changes to assessment in National 5

The National 5 courses are now assessed through the following components:

Accounting

Component	Marks
Question paper (2 hours)	130
Assignment (2 hours)	50

Administration and IT

Component	Marks
Question paper (2 hours; new component)	50
Assignment (3 hours)	70

Business Management

Component	Marks
Question paper (2 hours)	90
Assignment (1,300 words)	30

Economics

Component	Marks
Question paper (2 hours)	90
Assignment (1,300 words)	30

Changes to assessment in Higher courses from session 2018–19

Units and unit assessments will be removed from Higher courses from session 2018–19 and we have started our review of the Higher course assessments. For this, we are working closely with our National Qualifications Support Teams (NQSTs) for each subject. Our NQSTs include teachers and lecturers who currently deliver National Courses, and representatives of professional associations. We will also meet with a sample of teachers to gauge their views on the proposed changes and the implications of these.

The publication of new and revised Higher materials will follow a similar timescale to National 5:

End of April 2018	Revised Higher course specifications
End of May to end of September 2018	Course support notes New/revised specimen question papers New/revised coursework assessment tasks

We will provide further information on what the changes to assessment are for each subject by the end of January 2018.

Conditions of assessment for coursework

To ensure fairness for all candidates, it is essential that the specified assessment conditions for coursework are consistently applied in all centres. The following documents detail the specific conditions that must be followed in each assessment:

- course specification
- course assessment specification (Higher and Advanced Higher only)
- coursework assessment task

In addition to these documents, you must also refer to the following document, which is available from the coursework section of the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher subject web pages:

- [Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#)

This document provides important information on the time and volume of assessment, the use of resources, and the supervision, control and authentication of assessment — including examples.

Changes to documents

Revised National 5 documents and assessment support materials

Following the removal of units and unit assessments from the National 5 courses, we have strengthened the course assessment to ensure it assesses the full content of each course.

We have published revised course specifications and revised assessment support materials for the National 5 courses, which detail the requirements of the revised course assessments from session 2017–18 onwards. The documents are available from the National 5 subject web pages at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects. Further information on the changes to documents and assessment support materials is provided below.

Course specifications

In April 2017, we started to publish revised course specifications which provide detailed information about the National 5 courses and course assessments, including the conditions of assessment that must be followed. The revised documents were produced by merging the previous course specifications, course assessment specifications and general assessment information into a single, streamlined document for each subject. Course support notes have been added to the course specifications as appendices.

The relevant course specifications are available from the 'Essential information' section of the National 5 web pages linked below:

[Accounting](#)

[Administration and IT](#)

[Business Management](#)

[Economics](#)

Specimen question papers

Accounting

We have produced a specimen question paper to exemplify the new mark allocation and duration. It is available from the 'Assessment' section of the [National 5 Accounting web page](#).

- Section 1 is now worth 70 marks: 2 x 35 marks (previously 2 x 30 marks)
- Section 2 is now worth 60 marks: 4 x 15 marks (previously 4 x 10 marks)

Administration and IT

We have created a specimen question paper from a past assignment paper. It is available from the 'Assessment' section of the [National 5 Administration and IT web page](#). The mark allocation for the new question paper component is:

- Spreadsheet: 20 marks (with a variance of +/- 3 marks)
- Database: 20 marks (with a variance of +/- 3 marks)
- Theory: 10 marks (with a variance of +/- 3 marks)

You can access the related e-files under the specimen question papers tab on the same web page.

Business Management

We have produced a specimen question paper to exemplify the new mark allocation and duration. It is available from the 'Assessment' section of the [National 5 Business Management web page](#).

- Section 1 is now worth 40 marks: 2 x 20 marks (previously 2 x 15 marks)
- Section 2 is now worth 50 marks: 5 x 10 marks (previously 4 x 10 marks)

Economics

We have produced a specimen question paper to exemplify the new mark allocation and duration. It is available from the 'Assessment' section of the [National 5 Economics web page](#).

- Section 1 is now worth 40 marks: 2 x 20 marks (previously 2 x 15 marks)
 - Section 2 is now worth 50 marks: 5 x 10 marks (previously 4 x 10 marks)
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Coursework assessment tasks

Accounting

We have published a new specimen coursework assessment task. It is available, together with the related e-files, from the Coursework tab of the [National 5 Accounting web page](#).

The time allocated to complete the assignment is now 2 hours and must be completed in one sitting.

Administration and IT

We have published a new specimen coursework assessment task. It is available, together with the related e-files, from the Coursework tab of the [National 5 Administration and IT web page](#).

The time allocated to complete the assignment is now 3 hours, which must be completed in a maximum of two sittings. The mark allocation for the revised assignment is:

- Word-processing/desktop publishing: 30 marks (with a variance of +/- 3 marks)
- Communication (presentation, e-mail, e-diary, internet): 30 marks (with a variance of +/- 3 marks)
- Theory: 10 marks (with a variance of +/- 3 marks)

Business Management

We have published a revised coursework assessment task. It is available from the Coursework tab of the [National 5 Business Management web page](#) together with a sample notes template. The template has been produced for candidates to use if they wish, to help them complete the assignment.

The new mark allocation for the assignment is:

- Background information: 4 marks
- Research methods and sources: 6 marks
- Findings, analysis and interpretation: 12 marks
- Conclusion(s)/recommendation(s): 6 marks
- Collating and reporting: 2 marks

Economics

We have published a revised coursework assessment task. It is available from the Coursework tab of the [National 5 Economics web page](#), together with a sample notes template. The template has been produced for candidates to use if they wish, to help them complete the assignment.

The new mark allocation for the assignment is:

- Introduction: 3 marks
 - Research sources: 6 marks
 - Findings, analysis and interpretation: 12 marks
 - Conclusion(s)/recommendation(s): 4 marks
 - Economic theory: 3 marks
 - Structure and presentation: 2 marks
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Changes to documents following Diet 2017

Higher Accounting

Analysing Accounting Information unit assessment support pack 1 (UASP1)

We have amended task 2(b). Full details are in the history of changes section at the end of the document.

Higher Economics

Coursework assessment task

We have provided further clarification in the detailed marking instructions and updated the worked examples in the additional guidance column.

Advanced Higher Accounting

Coursework assessment task, General assessment information

We have provided clarification to marking guidance, where a candidate has not used a FTSE 100 company.

Advanced Higher Business Management

Coursework assessment task, General Assessment Information

We have made minor amendments to clarify the detailed marking instructions. Full details are in the history of changes section at the end of the document.

Supportive resources

National 5 audio presentations

We have published audio presentations that focus on the requirements of the revised National 5 course assessments.

You can access the audio presentations from the **CPD webinar/audio and support** tabs on the National 5 subject web pages linked below:

[Accounting](#)

[Administration and IT](#)

[Business Management](#)

[Economics](#)

Understanding Standards materials/events

National 5 Administration and IT

We have recently published question paper and assignment materials from the Understanding Standards events held in September. You can access these materials on our [Understanding Standards website](#) by inserting Administration and IT in the subject box or by accessing the link on the Understanding Standards tab on the [National 5 Administration and IT web page](#).

Further information and guidance

Accounting

We have updated the following documents which can be found in the 'related information' section of the subject web page:

- National 5 Accounting Terminology Resource Bank — we have removed the old terminology and updated the treatment of Cash Discount.
- National 5 Accounting formulae sheet
- Suggested layouts for financial statements in accounting courses National 5 and Higher — a Process Costing template has been added.

We are in the process of updating the Higher Accounting Terminology Resource Bank which will be available shortly.

Accounting topics for assignments

We will be assessing the following topics in the 2018 assignments:

National 5

Ledger Accounts
Inventory Control
Cash Budget

Higher

Manufacturing Accounts
Service Costing
Decision-Making

Coursework

Coursework distribution and uplift dates are as follows for Business Education subjects:

- Coursework will be distributed to centres via SQA Secure on:
12 February 2018 for Higher Accounting
26 February 2018 for National 5 Accounting, National 5 and Higher Administration and IT
- March uplift of coursework from centres:
All National 5 coursework
Higher Accounting coursework
- April uplift of coursework from centres:
All Higher coursework (except Accounting)
All Advanced Higher coursework

Administration and IT mapping

A document has been jointly created by SQA and Education Scotland to show the mapping from the technologies experiences and outcomes, including digital literacy, into the National 3 and National 4 Administration and IT courses.

This is available under the related information section of the [Administration and IT subject homepage](#) and the web pages for each level.

General Data Protection Regulations

The General Data Protection Regulations become legislation on 25 May 2018. These regulations will incorporate the Data Protection Act. Candidates will not be examined on the General Data Protection Regulations in the 2018 diet. However, candidates will be awarded marks if they provide appropriate answers referring to either the General Data Protection Regulations or the Data Protection Act.

National Qualification Support Team

Ahead of the autumn meeting of the Business Education National Qualification Support Team (NQST) we would like to add to the existing membership.

NQSTs are subject-specific stakeholder consultation groups that feed back to SQA on the internal and external assessment of National Qualifications.

These groups communicate in secure online discussion forums as well as during an annual face-to-face meeting. For more information and to express an interest in joining the team, visit

www.sqa.org.uk/nqst

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