



Common questions about National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Art and Design

National 4

What are the requirements of the National 4 Added Value Unit?

Candidates select one expressive idea and one design idea from their previous work and then use these ideas to plan and produce a final piece of expressive artwork and a design solution. They will then evaluate both of these pieces of work.

This unit will be internally assessed and candidates do not need to mount or formally present their work.

A unit assessment support pack, which includes a template, is available for teachers or lecturers. Candidates can use this to evaluate and record evidence of their work.

What is the threshold for the number of assessment standards the candidates need to meet in order to achieve the National 4 Added Value Unit?

Candidates are required to meet 7 out of the 10 assessment standards in order to achieve the National 4 Added Value Unit.

National 5

What is the structure of the National 5 Art and Design course?

There are three externally-assessed components of course assessment:

- ◆ a question paper — 50 marks (20% of the total mark)
- ◆ an expressive portfolio — 100 marks (40% of the total mark)
- ◆ a design portfolio — 100 marks (40% of the total mark)

National 5 course assessment — question paper

Do candidates have a choice of questions in the question paper?

In National 5, the question paper has two sections: Expressive Art Studies and Design Studies.

Candidates will complete one mandatory and one optional question in each section.

In both the Expressive Arts and Design Studies sections candidates will attempt the mandatory question and select **one** from a choice of five image questions.

How many artists do candidates need to study?

In the Mandatory Questions 1 and 7 part (a), candidates are asked to comment on two artworks by different artists that they have studied. Candidates should study appropriate artworks or designs that will prepare them for responding to three unseen prompts in each question.

In part (b), they are asked to select one artist or designer whose work was discussed in part (a) and explain the impact of social, cultural and other influences **on any of their work and practice**.

Does the National 5 question paper have specific categories?

Specific categories are not identified in the National 5 question paper although there will be questions on 2D and 3D artworks. In the Expressive Art Studies section, people, places and objects (or combinations of these) will be represented with a variety of approaches. These include media and techniques, eg painting, photography, mixed media work, sculpture, installation, contemporary and traditional approaches.

In the Design Studies section, a range of 2D and 3D design areas will be represented. These will include examples of design work from the following broad categories:

- ◆ visual communication or graphics
- ◆ product design

- ◆ environmental design (architecture/structures/interiors)
- ◆ jewellery
- ◆ fashion/textile design

Do candidates have to write about a contemporary artist or designer?

Candidates will not be penalised if there is no reference to a contemporary artist or designer in their responses.

National 5 course assessment — portfolio

How can the portfolio work be presented?

Work can be presented in a variety of ways for assessment. The overall maximum size for work, including 3D work, should not exceed three A2 size, single-sided sheets or equivalent for the Design portfolio, and three A2 size, single-sided sheets or equivalent for the Expressive portfolio.

Portfolios must be able to be folded to a size not exceeding A1.

Portfolio sheets may be assembled in **either landscape or portrait format** as required to accommodate differences in the amount and scale of development and finished art and design work produced by individual candidates.

As candidates can present their work in a variety of ways, it is important to label their submission indicating the number of sheets (1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3 as appropriate).

Layering of work is not acceptable. All work selected for external assessment should occupy its own space on the sheets. Evaluations should be attached to the sheets and not overlap work or extend beyond the three A2 sheets or equivalent.

Each stage of the candidate's portfolio is assessed against specific criteria. The assessment criteria is described in the National 5 Coursework assessment task documents which are available on the [National 5 Art and Design web page](#) under 'Coursework'.

How should candidates present their evaluations?

We have produced evaluation templates for candidates to complete and submit with their Design and Expressive portfolios. **These templates are mandatory for National 5** and can be found on the [National 5 Art and Design web page](#) under 'Coursework'.

The evaluations should be completed on the A4 templates and included on the first sheet of the portfolio. It shouldn't overlap the candidates' expressive or design work. There is no word count, but evaluations must not go beyond the A4 space provided. The portfolio, including the evaluation, must not exceed three A2-sized sheets or equivalent.

Evaluations should focus on evaluative rather than descriptive comments. Refer to the detailed marking instructions in the National 5 Art and Design portfolio coursework assessment task documents.

Should the portfolios demonstrate evidence of the candidate's investigation into artists and designers?

The portfolios do not need to demonstrate evidence of the candidate's investigation of artists and designers and their work. This knowledge and understanding will be demonstrated in the question paper, however the candidate's practical work is likely to draw upon and develop aspects of this understanding through the use of visual/design elements or choice of theme/stimulus.

Centres could choose to include a reference to aspects of their study of artists and designers if they feel it helps to showcase the development process. This could be a particular painting or piece of design.

Do candidates need to include investigation and research work in the portfolios?

Yes, as of session 2017–18, investigation and research work must be included in the portfolios.

For the expressive portfolio, candidates have the opportunity to:

- ◆ produce relevant 2D and/or 3D analytical drawings, studies and investigative research, and use this to produce a final piece
- ◆ use a selection of materials, techniques and/or technology, visual elements and expressive effects
- ◆ reflect on and evaluate their creative process and the visual qualities of their portfolio with reference to their theme/stimulus

For the design portfolio, candidates have the opportunity to:

- ◆ produce and compile a variety of relevant 2D and/or 3D investigative material and market research, and using this to produce a single line of development leading to a design solution
- ◆ use a selection of materials, techniques and/or technology, and demonstrating their understanding of design elements
- ◆ reflect on and evaluate their creative process and the aesthetic and functional qualities of their design portfolio with reference to their design brief requirements

Can candidates request the return of their portfolio work?

Yes, candidates can request the return of their National 5 portfolios. For further information please visit the [return of materials](#) web page.

Higher

What is the structure for the Higher Art and Design course?

There are two internally-assessed units:

- ◆ Art and Design: Design Activity
- ◆ Art and Design: Expressive Activity

And two externally-assessed components of course assessment:

- ◆ a portfolio
- ◆ a question paper

Internal assessment

Does the unit work need to be sent to SQA to be centrally marked?

No, candidates will be internally assessed on a pass or fail basis against the outcomes and assessment standards in the unit specifications. Assessment decisions should be based on whether the candidate's response meets the requirements of the assessment standards. Unit work is subject to external visiting verification.

Is there a separate Art and Design Studies Unit?

No, there is a two-unit structure: *Art and Design: Expressive Activity* and *Art and Design: Design Activity*. Each unit integrates what was previously known as Art and Design Studies with the practical work.

Do the artists and designers studied in outcome 1 of the units have to relate to the practical work in outcome 2?

Yes, they have to relate in some way to the theme of the unit. Consequently the study of artists and designers should inform the practical work.

How should candidates present evidence for their unit assessment?

Evidence for unit assessment can be presented in any appropriate format:

- ◆ sketchbooks
- ◆ journals, logs
- ◆ ideas book
- ◆ electronic diary
- ◆ teacher observation checklists
- ◆ annotated comments

- ◆ written notes

Centres should ensure that the relevant assessment standards are clearly identified. This could be on the work itself, on an accompanying checklist or assessment log.

Does the 1750 timeline apply to the new National Courses?

No, there is no restriction. Candidates can study art and design works from any time period and/or any country/culture.

Higher course assessment — portfolio

How can the portfolio work be presented?

Work can be presented in a variety of ways for assessment. The overall maximum size for work, including 3D work, should not exceed three A2 size, single-sided sheets or equivalent for the Design portfolio, and three A2 size, single-sided sheets or equivalent for the Expressive portfolio.

Portfolios must be able to be folded to a size not exceeding A1.

Portfolio sheets may be assembled in **either landscape or portrait format** as required to accommodate differences in the amount and scale of development and finished art and design work produced by individual candidates.

As candidates can present their work in a variety of ways, it is important to label their submission indicating the number of sheets (1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3 as appropriate).

Candidates should clearly identify the initial idea or starting point developed in the portfolio and any research and investigation work which informs its development.

Please note that **no marks are awarded for this work**.

Layering of work is not acceptable. All work selected for external assessment should occupy its own space on the sheets. Evaluations should be attached to the sheets and not overlap work or extend beyond the three A2 sheets or equivalent.

Each stage of the candidate's portfolio is assessed against specific criteria. This assessment criteria is described in the Coursework assessment task for Higher Art and Design available on the SQA Secure Site.

How should candidates present their evaluations?

We have produced evaluation templates for candidates to complete and submit with their Design and Expressive portfolios. **These templates are mandatory for Higher** and can be found on the [Higher Art and Design web page](#) under 'Submitting Coursework'.

Evaluations should focus on evaluative rather than descriptive comments. Refer to the detailed marking instructions in the Coursework assessment task for Higher Art and Design available on the SQA Secure Site.

Should the portfolio demonstrate evidence of the candidate's investigation into artists and designers?

The portfolio does not need to demonstrate evidence of the candidate's investigation of artists and designers and their work. This knowledge and understanding will be demonstrated in the question paper, however the candidate's practical work is likely to draw on and develop some aspects of this understanding through media handling and their choice of theme/stimulus.

When presenting the original starting point for the subsequent art and design work, centres can choose to include a reference to aspects of their study of artists and designers if they feel it helps to showcase the development process. This could take the form of a copy of a particular painting or piece of design. It should be noted that an example of the candidate's creative starting point must also be included.

Do candidates need to include investigation and research work in the portfolio?

Candidates should only include an edited and limited selection of relevant investigation and/or research work if it clearly supports and helps identify the candidates' creative starting point for further development. Candidates should also communicate their expressive theme and the main points of the design brief. This could be a short description highlighting the main elements of the brief rather than submitting the full details.

The purpose of including this work is to contextualise the portfolio and also to provide supporting evidence of the continued development of a single line of enquiry. This work should be kept to a minimum and be **clearly identified**. Inclusion of unnecessary or unrelated unit work can make the candidates' line of development unfocused and difficult to follow. No marks are awarded for this work. For more information, please see the Art and Design course reports on the subject page.

Can candidates request the return of their portfolio work?

Yes, candidates can request the return of their Higher portfolios. For further information please visit the [return of materials](#) web page.

What is the relationship between unit work and the portfolio?

Art and Design: Expressive

Candidates will focus on producing expressive drawings, studies and investigative research using a variety of art materials, techniques and/or technology in response to a theme/stimuli. They will then develop initial compositional ideas and artwork in response to the theme or stimuli.

Unit assessment support packs, available on SQA's secure website, provide details of the minimum standard for a unit pass. Included are three analytical drawings and/or studies of their subject matter. These are then used to develop a minimum of two compositional ideas for the expressive artwork.

Unit work includes research, investigation and initial development; whereas the portfolio involves further development of a single idea, a final piece and evaluation. Unit work is internally assessed (pass/fail) and does not contribute to the marks awarded in the portfolio.

For the portfolio, candidates should state their theme and include the initial idea/starting point. They could also include a selection of relevant research and investigation evidence to contextualise the further development work. The starting point and any contextual unit work included in the portfolio should be clearly identified. Evidence of this work (photographs, photocopies, teacher checklists) should be retained in the centre as it may be required for external verification. Alternatively, centres could choose to submit the scanned/photocopied work and retain the originals.

The same principles apply to Art and Design: Design.

Higher course assessment — question paper

Do candidates have a choice of questions in the question paper?

At Higher, the question paper has two sections: Expressive Art Studies and Design Studies.

In the Expressive Art Studies section, candidates will select **one** from a choice of two image questions — question 1 or question 2, and **one** from question 3 or question 4.

In the Design Studies section, candidates will select **one** from a choice of two image questions — question 5 or question 6, and **one** from question 7 or question 8.

Does the Higher question paper have specific categories?

Specific categories are not identified in the Higher question paper. Questions and images will be accessible to all candidates and will allow for the different approaches taken by centres.

Do candidates have to write about a contemporary artist/designer?

The Higher question paper will not specifically ask for responses to include reference to a contemporary artist or designer. The contemporary element is a requirement of the course — a candidate will have studied a contemporary artist/designer as part of their coursework but may not choose to write about this artist/designer in the question paper. Candidates will not be penalised if there is no reference to a contemporary artist/designer in their responses.

Do candidates have to give biographical information about artists/designers?

The Higher question paper does not ask for biographical information on artists or designers. However, if such information is relevant and helps explain or expand on points a candidate has made, then this would be acceptable. General biographical information which does not explain or expand such points will not be awarded any marks. The focus of questions 3, 4, 7 and 8 part (b) is the artwork/design work that the candidate has chosen, not the artist(s)/designer(s).

Advanced Higher

What is the structure of the Advanced Higher Art and Design courses?

Advanced Higher Art and Design (Expressive)

There are two mandatory internally-assessed units:

- ◆ Art and Design: Expressive Studies
- ◆ Art and Design: Expressive Enquiry

And one externally-assessed component of course assessment:

- ◆ a portfolio

Advanced Higher Art and Design (Design)

There are two mandatory internally-assessed units:

- ◆ Art and Design: Design Studies
- ◆ Art and Design: Design Enquiry

And one externally-assessed component of course assessment:

- ◆ a portfolio

Does the unit work need to be sent to SQA to be centrally marked?

No, candidates will be internally assessed on a pass/fail basis against the outcomes and assessment standards in the unit specifications. Assessment decisions should be based on whether the candidate's response meets the requirements of the assessment standards.

Unit work is subject to external visiting verification. However, unit work may be included in the opening sheet of the course presentation.

What is the relationship between unit work and the portfolio?

At Advanced Higher, the units of the course form a background and starting point of the portfolio. While completing the unit research, candidates study the work of artists or designers and identify and investigate the creative origins of their enquiry. This work is assessed internally, with external verification, as a self-contained unit. The development of the unit work into the portfolio can be quite straightforward as the process of research and development continues and evolves.

How can the portfolio be presented?

Portfolio sheets at Advanced Higher level can be up to A1 in size. A minimum of eight A1 sheets and a maximum of 15 A1 sheets or equivalent can be submitted for assessment. An 8–10 sheet portfolio is typical of a design project that also includes 3D work or animation. 3D work, or photographs of 3D work, can be submitted as part of the portfolio as appropriate.

In addition to the above, candidates should submit an introductory sheet which communicates the creative starting point for the further development of their selected idea(s). This introductory sheet is not marked.

Sketchbook(s) can be submitted as evidence, where they show further development and/or resolution of initial idea(s). Sketchbooks should clearly show which aspects of the sketchbook work are to be considered by markers.

It is helpful to markers to indicate the development of the portfolio by numbering the sheets sequentially. Numbering can go on the front or back of the sheets submitted for external assessment.

How can the critical analysis be presented?

Critical analysis is 2,000 words.

Candidates will be penalised if they exceed these limits by 10% (submissions in excess of 2,200 words).

The applicable penalties are 10% of the available marks; therefore candidates who submit a critical analysis over 2,200 words will have their assessed mark reduced by three.

Candidates should enter their word counts in the relevant boxes on the flyleaf that accompanies their portfolio.

It can be presented in **any appropriate format**. For example, image(s) of the work(s) may be presented on one or more portfolio sheets along with detailed extensive annotations or in a separate document.

Where annotations are used, they must be legible. Whichever way it is presented, the critical analysis should include clearly-captioned images of the art work(s) or design work(s) researched. The sources must be clearly cited within the text and referenced using appropriate conventions.

This written study should analyse a work or group of related works associated with the practical portfolio, and it should also explore selected aspects of contextual connections or ideas that link to the topic. These two parts, analysis and context, may be dealt with separately or together.

Are there any exemplars available for the Advanced Higher portfolio or critical analysis?

The Principal Assessor for Advancer Higher conducted a webinar session which is available to view in the Understanding Standards section of SQA's secure website. This hour-long video provides examples of portfolios and critical analysis.

Some exemplars of critical analysis for Advanced Higher are available on SQA's secure website, in the Understanding Standards section.

How should candidates present their evaluation?

Evaluation is 300 words.

Candidates will be penalised if they exceed these limits by 10% (submissions in excess of 330 words).

The evaluation can be presented in any preferred format — as a single sheet or a series of detailed annotations. Where annotations are used within the portfolio, they must be legible and candidate responses should clearly relate to the descriptions below.

Will candidates' Advanced Higher portfolios be returned to centres after the external assessment?

Advanced Higher Art and Design portfolios are no longer returned free of charge after external assessment in June. These portfolios must now be requested as part of the return of materials process and the appropriate fee paid. Requested portfolios will now be returned between October and December along with any other return of material requests. For further information please visit the [return of materials](#) web page.

Can a moving image piece or animation be submitted as the final piece for an expressive portfolio?

An animation can be an expressive final piece of work.

There are specific marks for coherence in the new Advanced Higher, therefore it is important to structure and present the project as a single consistent enquiry. The process of developing ideas must be clearly shown, and it is important to present the work in a way that puts the development of ideas at the centre of the submission.

General Curriculum for Excellence questions and answers can be found on the [frequently asked questions section](#) of SQA's website.