



Common questions about Practical Metalworking

Do candidates need to sit the question paper at National 5?

Yes. It is a component of course assessment and, as with all subjects, the marks from all components are combined to determine a grade.

Can the size of the practical activity (my materials supplier can only provide thickness x when thickness y is required) be changed?

The practical activity must be delivered to candidates as it has been produced. The only exception to this is with regards to materials thicknesses. Where the prescribed thickness is not feasible (typically due to supplier issues) then this can be changed but centres will have to amend the working drawings to take account of this. Please refer to the practical activity documentation for further information.

My candidates don't like the object in the practical activity, can we do something else?

The practical activity is a course assessment component (in the same way as a question paper or an assignment in Graphic Communication or Engineering Science). The only task that is valid is the one that SQA provides and only for the stated academic session. If you feel that other objects may be more engaging for candidates, then utilise these as part of your learning and teaching activity.

The practical activity changes each year, what happens if my candidates do the wrong one?

This shouldn't happen as the practical activity is only available on our secure website and it clearly shows which session it is valid for. However, if the current practical activity is not undertaken then no marks can be awarded.

Does an estimated grade need to be produced?

Yes. Not only is it a condition of offering the qualification, it is a necessity for candidates who may need to make use of our [exceptional circumstances provision](#).

Can the practical activity simply be printed out and handed to the candidates to undertake?

No. The practical activity will include instructions for teachers, lecturers and candidates. These may vary each year but they will include an introduction to the practical activity and information on preparing candidates before they begin.

Can the content of the practical activity be discussed on forums or secure groups?

No. The practical activity is a secure course assessment (the mark contributes to the overall grade for the candidate). It is available on our secure website and cannot be shared or discussed on other forums, including social media, which are not secure

Is it possible to deliver some content, have the candidate undertake part of the practical activity, deliver more content and then have the candidate complete the practical activity?

No. The practical activity is to be undertaken after all the course content has been delivered and it cannot be interrupted by periods of learning and teaching.

As the practical activity cannot be interrupted by periods of learning and teaching, does this mean that candidates have to do this for a full day and for a number of days?

No, there is no requirement for this. However, it would need to be undertaken in consecutive periods of subject time.

For example:

Practical Metalworking is on period one on Monday, period three on Wednesday and five on Friday. The candidate would begin on Monday and then stop to attend their other classes. The candidate would then resume on Wednesday, stopping again, before starting again on Friday.

The teacher or lecturer must ensure that the candidate's work (and the practical activity) remain secure between class periods and throughout its undertaking

Does my centre need specific approval to offer these qualifications?

Yes. As part of the recent changes, this course is no longer auto-approved for use in centres. If your centre currently delivers the course (or has done in the past three years), then no approval is required, however if your centre has not delivered in the past three years, then centre approval is needed (this must be done before delivery begins).

More information on this can be found on the [approval for centres web page](#).

Can the coursework mark from last session be used for a resit candidate?

No. The practical activity is now annually issued and is only valid for the current academic session. A resit candidate will have to undertake the practical activity relative to the session that they are sitting the question paper.

If units are delivered, rather than the course, how long does evidence of assessment need to be retained for?

This timescale is unchanged — unit evidence must be retained until the end of the academic session in which the assessment decisions were made.

If there is a two-year delivery, when are candidates given the practical activity?

The practical activity given to the candidates must be the one from the same academic session as the question paper that they will be sitting. Additionally, the practical activity cannot be undertaken by candidates until all content has been delivered (so it couldn't be undertaken part-way through the first year of a two-year delivery).

Is a Higher course being considered in this subject area?

At this time, the highest level this subject is available in is SCQF level 5 (National 5). There are currently no plans to develop an SCQF level 6 (Higher) qualification in this area.

National Qualification questions and answers can be found on the [frequently asked questions](#) section of SQA's website.