



National 4  
Course  
Specification



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# National 4 English Course Specification (C724 74)

**Valid from August 2013**

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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## Course outline

**Course title:** National 4 English  
**SCQF:** level 4 (24 SCQF credit points)  
**Course code:** C724 74

### Mandatory Units

H23H 74 English: Analysis and Evaluation (National 4) 6 SCQF credit points  
Or  
H6MF 74 English: Analysis and Evaluation (National 4)\* 6 SCQF credit points

And either:

H23T 74 English: Creation and Production (National 4) 6 SCQF credit points  
Or  
H6NS 74 English: Creation and Production (National 4)\* 6 SCQF credit points

and

H23W 74 Literacy (National 4) 6 SCQF credit points

and

**Added Value Unit**

H23Y 74 English: Assignment (National 4) 6 SCQF credit points

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for the assessment of added value in the Added Value Unit. Further information on this Unit is provided in the Assessment section.

\*Scottish Studies Award contributing Unit: This Course Specification should be read in conjunction with the relevant Scottish Studies Unit Specification on the [Scottish Studies Award web page](#).

### Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 3 English Course or relevant component Units

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for doing this Course. Further information on relevant experiences and outcomes is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

### Core Skills

Achievement of this Course gives automatic certification of the following:

## **Progression**

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ other qualifications in English or related areas
- ◆ further study, employment or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

## **Equality and inclusion**

This Course Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

## **Rationale**

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities, as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

## **Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles**

Language and literacy are of personal, social and economic importance. Learners' ability to use language lies at the centre of the development and expression of their emotions, thinking, learning and sense of personal identity.

The Course provides learners with the opportunity to develop skills in listening, talking, reading and writing, which are essential for learning, life and work, to develop their ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings, and respond to those of other people, and to use different media effectively for learning and communication.

The Course enables learners to understand and use vocabulary, word patterns, text structures and style. Learners recognise, analyse and use language for a range of purposes. Through this Course, learners develop the ability to understand and use language in practical and relevant contexts.

Learners encounter a wide range of different types of texts in different media. Building on the four capacities, the Course enables learners to communicate, be critical thinkers, develop cultural awareness and be creative. Learners develop an appreciation of Scotland's literary and linguistic heritage.

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

The main purpose of the Course is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop the skills of listening, talking, reading and writing in order to understand and use language.

As learners develop their literacy skills, they will be able to process information more easily, apply knowledge of language in practical and relevant contexts, and gain confidence to undertake new and more challenging tasks in a variety of situations.

The Course offers learners opportunities to develop and extend a wide range of skills. In particular, the Course aims to enable learners to develop the ability to:

- ◆ listen, talk, read and write, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ understand, analyse and evaluate texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language and media
- ◆ create and produce texts, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ plan and research, integrating and applying language skills as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ apply knowledge of language

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

The Course provides flexibility, personalisation and choice to enable learners to achieve in different ways and at different paces.

The Course provides opportunities for learners to build on prior learning experienced in a broad general education or in English qualifications at a lower SCQF level.

The Course also provides learners with the opportunity to develop an understanding of how language works and use language to communicate ideas and information in English, to use creative and critical thinking to synthesise ideas and arguments, and to develop critical literacy skills and personal, interpersonal and team-working skills.

The Course provides learners with the opportunity to enhance their enjoyment and understanding of their own and other cultures.

The Course fosters an appreciation of language awareness and of a wide range of literature and texts. This enables learners to access their own cultural heritage and history, as well as the culture and history of others.

National 4 English offers learners the opportunity to develop straightforward language skills in the contexts of literature, language and media.

The Course is designed to be accessible. The Units are organised by the receptive (listening and reading) and productive (talking and writing) skills of language.

The Course provides opportunities for vertical and lateral progression to National Courses and to other SQA qualifications in English and related fields.

# Course structure and conditions of award

## Course structure

This Course is made up of four mandatory Units. The Course provides learners with the opportunity to develop their listening, talking, reading and writing skills in order to understand and use language. The four Units include the four language skills of listening, talking, reading and writing.

The structure of the Units enables learners to focus on the skills required to understand and use language and to integrate listening, talking, reading and writing skills across the Units. Each Unit also offers opportunities for learners to focus on particular skills.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

### **English: Analysis and Evaluation (National 4)**

The purpose of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop listening and reading skills in the contexts of literature, language and media. Learners develop the skills needed to understand, analyse and evaluate straightforward texts.

### **English: Creation and Production (National 4)**

The purpose of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop talking and writing skills in familiar contexts. Learners develop the skills needed to create and produce straightforward texts in both written and oral forms.

### **Literacy (National 4)**

The purpose of this Unit is to develop the learners' reading, writing, listening and talking skills in a variety of forms relevant for learning, life and work. Learners develop the ability to understand straightforward ideas and information presented orally and in writing. Learners also develop the ability to communicate ideas and information orally and in writing with technical accuracy.

### **Added Value Unit: English Assignment (National 4)**

The purpose of this Added Value Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to apply their language skills to investigate and report on a chosen topic. This assignment will allow the learner to demonstrate challenge and application.

## Conditions of award

To achieve the National 4 English Course, learners must pass all of the required Units, including the Added Value Unit. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section.

National 4 Courses are not graded.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding

Full skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course are given in the *Added Value Unit Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section. This covers:

- ◆ listening, talking, reading and writing skills, as appropriate to purpose and audience
- ◆ understanding, analysing and evaluating straightforward texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language and media
- ◆ creating and producing straightforward texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in familiar contexts
- ◆ using knowledge of language

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.sqa.org.uk/scqf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/scqf)).

# Assessment

Further information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Support Notes* and the *Added Value Unit Specification*.

## Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*.

They can be assessed on an individual Unit basis or by using other approaches which combine the assessment for more than one Unit.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows.

### **English: Analysis and Evaluation (National 4)**

Through the study of straightforward texts in literature, language or media, learners will use their listening and reading skills to provide evidence of understanding, analysis and evaluation, as appropriate to purpose and audience.

### **English: Creation and Production (National 4)**

Learners will be required to provide evidence of their talking and writing skills to create and produce straightforward texts in a familiar context, as appropriate to purpose and audience. Learners will be required to demonstrate technical accuracy in written texts.

### **Literacy (National 4)**

Learners will be required to provide evidence of their reading, listening, writing and talking skills in a variety of forms relevant for learning, life and work. Learners will demonstrate their ability to read, listen to and understand straightforward texts. Learners will demonstrate their ability to communicate through talk and in writing. Learners will be required to demonstrate technical accuracy in written texts.

## Added Value Unit

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#).<sup>1</sup> At National 4, added value will be assessed in an Added Value Unit. The Added Value Unit will address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

In the National 4 English Course, the Added Value Unit will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

Learners will be required to provide evidence of their ability to apply their language skills to investigate and report on a chosen topic. Learners will demonstrate their ability

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html)



to select and evaluate relevant information using their reading skills, to present their findings, either orally or in writing, and to respond to questions on the chosen topic using their listening skills.

## **Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work**

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

### **1 Literacy**

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

### **5 Thinking skills**

- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Literacy skills shown in this National Course provide automatic certification of Core Skill: Communication at SCQF level 4.

## Administrative information

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**Published:** September 2014 (version 1.1)

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### History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	Scottish Studies Award Unit contributing information added. No other changes made to document content.	Qualifications Manager	September 2014

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