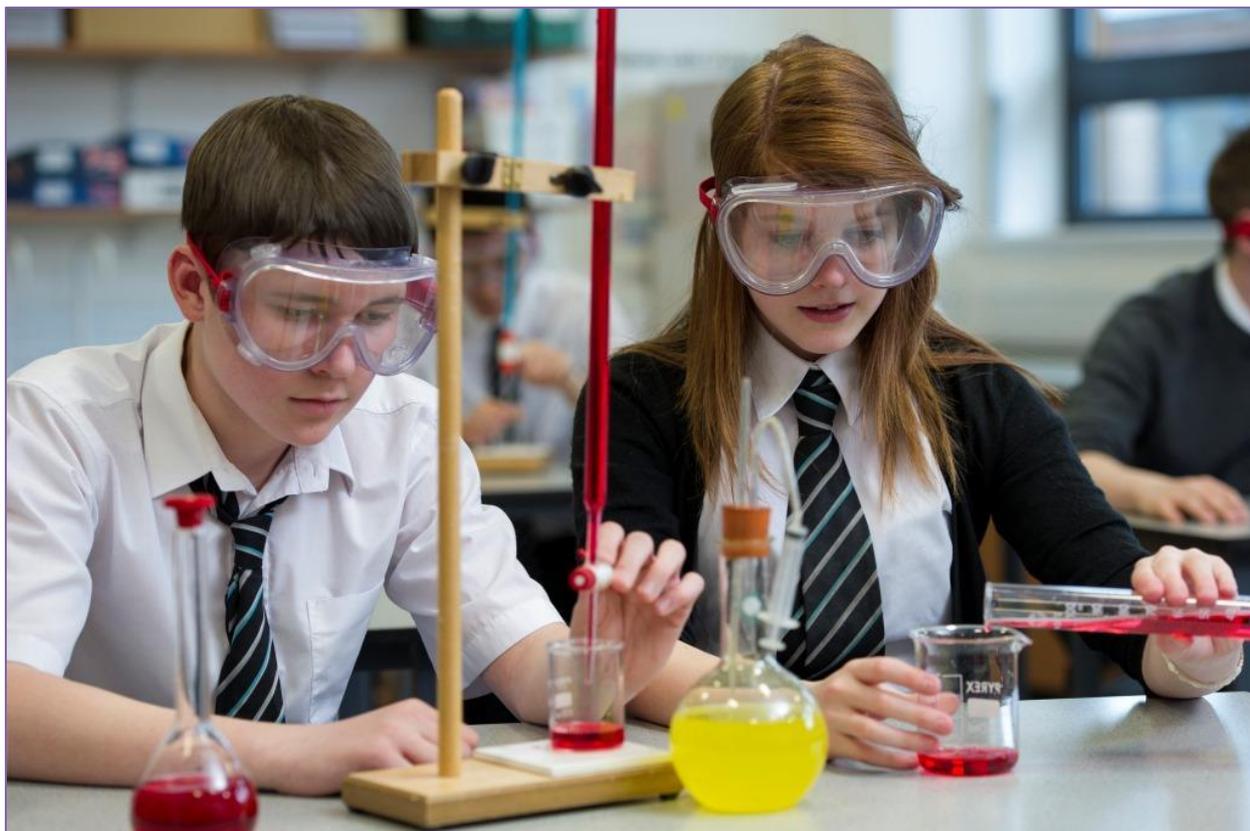


Chemistry



This update contains information on any recent updates to documents for Chemistry along with further information and guidance.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Andrew Shield
Qualifications Manager



The Qualifications Team

Andrew Shield
Qualifications Manager

Sheron Ross
Qualifications Officer

Bill Beveridge
Subject Implementation Manager

Changes to documents in August and September

As part of our agreed schedule of planned changes to documents for session 2016–17, the following documents have been revised.

Unit assessment support packs: National 3–Advanced Higher

As an interim measure for session 2016–17 only, marks have been added to some unit assessment support packs as **guidance** for how marks may be awarded for individual questions. These are **indicative** marks and totals and while they tend to follow mark allocations used in examinations at National 5 and above, there are instances where the suggested mark may differ from that used in the examinations. This is especially the case for the unit assessment support packs for National 3 and National 4. Where the suggested mark does differ from that used in the examinations, this should not be taken as an indication that the marks allocated to questions in exams will change.

Where centres have already allocated marks and used these to mark unit assessments there is **no requirement** to re-mark the assessments, even if the total mark arrived at by the centre is different from the guidance.

National 3

Unit assessment support

Suggested mark allocations have been added to the marking guidance and some minor amends have been made to the marking guidance.

National 4

Unit assessment support

Suggested mark allocations have been added to the marking guidance and some minor amends have been made to questions and the marking guidance.

National 5

Unit assessment support

Suggested mark allocations have been added to the marking guidance and some minor amends have been made to questions and the marking guidance.

Coursework: General Assessment Information; Coursework Assessment Task

The detailed marking instructions have been updated to reflect the changes to a number of the marking criteria, in particular the changes to the requirements for explaining the choice of sources and the chosen presentation formats. The instructions for candidates section has been updated to improve clarity and reflect the changes in the marking guidance.

Higher

Unit assessment support

Suggested mark allocations have been added to the marking guidance and some amendments have been made to questions and the marking guidance in various packs. Transfer of evidence guidance has been amended.

Coursework: General Assessment Information; Coursework Assessment Task

Instructions for candidates and detailed marking instructions have been modified to improve clarity. The documents have also been updated to reflect the changes to the marking instructions in terms of the requirement for candidates to process the measurements and observations from their experiment(s).

Data Booklet

The enthalpy of combustion value for benzene has been corrected. An alternative prominent wavelength in the spectrum for copper has been provided, as the most prominent line in the spectrum corresponds to a wavelength in ultraviolet.

The colour wheel has been replaced with one that addresses the problem of absorption for potassium permanganate but also avoids the problems of the simplified colour mixing type of wheel, which only uses primary and secondary colours as opposed to spectral colours.

Advanced Higher

Unit assessment support

Suggested mark allocations have been added to the questions to match the number of responses detailed in the marking guidance. Questions and associated marking guidance in various packs have been amended or replaced.

Coursework: General Assessment Information; Project Assessment Task

The detailed marking instructions have been updated for clarity and to remove some of the duplication and unnecessary detail. The word count range has been amended to better reflect the length of reports that were submitted in 2016 and the instructions for referencing have been amended. Where reports exceed the upper limit by more than 10% a 3 mark penalty will now be applied. Candidates must now use one of Vancouver, Harvard or Royal Society of Chemistry referencing styles. The instructions for candidates section has also been updated to reflect the changes in marking instructions.

Data Booklet

See details provided for Higher.

The Notification of Changes spreadsheet has been updated to reflect the latest changes to documents. You can view the spreadsheet at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjectchanges

Further information and guidance

Changes to National Courses

In September 2016, the Deputy First Minister announced that unit assessments will be removed from National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses. These changes will be implemented over a three-year period and we have started to review how each course is assessed.

[Find out more about the changes to National Courses.](#)

What's next for Subject Review Reports?

Following the Scottish Government decision to make changes to unit assessment in National Courses, we are reviewing current activities with regard to the Subject Review Reports and associated guidance notes.

Completed review report actions for 2016–17 will remain. Actions for 2017–18 onwards may be cancelled or rescheduled in light of the work associated with the revisions to National Courses, especially those relating to unit assessments.

Further information and subject-specific updates will continue to be communicated via Centre News and the subject web pages.

Guidance notes

- [National 3 Chemistry: Understanding the next steps for session 2016–17](#)
- [National 4 Chemistry: Understanding the next steps for session 2016–17](#)
- [National 5 Chemistry: Understanding the next steps for session 2016–17](#)
- [Higher Chemistry: Understanding the next steps for session 2016–17](#)
- [Advanced Higher Chemistry: Understanding the next steps for session 2016–17](#)

These documents outline the specific actions to take or points to be aware of when carrying out assessments with your candidates in session 2016–17.

Removal of exemplar question papers

Exemplar question papers were created as a revision resource for learners during the implementation of the new Higher and Advanced Higher National Qualifications. As we now have two years' worth of past papers for new Higher as well as a specimen question paper for each subject with an exam, the exemplar question papers will be removed from our website in the week commencing 24 October 2016. Associated guidance documents and guidance on the use of past paper questions documents will also be removed at this time.

The Advanced Higher exemplar question papers and associated guidance will remain for session 2016–17 and will be removed from the website in July 2017.

Course Reports

We strongly recommend that you read the annual Course Reports for the subject(s) and levels you are teaching. These reports are produced following the annual diet of exams and are published by the end of October. The reports provide informed and valuable commentary on the assessment for each component in the course, and include a summary of:

- candidate performance in the course assessment
- areas in which candidates performed well
- areas which candidates found demanding

The reports also contain advice on preparing future candidates, and statistical data relating to grade boundaries. Course Reports will be available from the relevant subject pages of our website at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects

Verification Key Messages

Key messages from rounds 1 and 2 of verification in session 2015–16 are available on the relevant subject pages of our website at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects. You can access them from the 'Verification and Course Reports' tab.

Looking ahead to session 2016–17

Marker recruitment opportunities for 2017

We are now accepting marker applications from teaching professionals to contribute to the 2017 exam diet. If you are interested in joining us as a marker, please visit the [appointee opportunities](#) section of our website where you will find a marker advert for all subjects and levels, with details of the role.

Becoming a marker helps to increase your awareness of the demands of course assessment and provides excellent professional and personal development.

Please check www.sqa.org.uk/appointees regularly for other appointee opportunities which may be of interest to you.

Understanding Standards programme

Our Understanding Standards programme will continue in the coming session and will include nominee training events, subject-specific course events and the publication of further Understanding Standards materials.

Understanding Standards course events 2016–17

We are running a programme of subject-specific Understanding Standards events from October 2016 until January 2017. The majority of these events will focus on the standards required for

course assessment at Advanced Higher; however there will also be additional events for other qualifications where a specific need has been identified.

For more information and to book your place, visit www.sqa.org.uk/nqevents. Please note that for each subject there is a maximum of one place per centre.

Understanding Standards materials

Understanding Standards materials contain real examples of candidate evidence from course and unit assessments, along with a commentary that explains why the evidence has or has not met the assessment standards. These materials are a really useful resource for helping you to strengthen your understanding of the standards required for assessment.

We will continue to publish new Understanding Standards materials throughout the coming session and you can access them from the following locations:

SQA Understanding Standards website (www.understandingstandards.org.uk)	SQA Secure website (https://secure.sqa.org.uk)
Candidate evidence and commentaries for externally assessed components of course assessment (including question papers).	Candidate evidence and commentaries for unit assessment and internally assessed components of course assessment.

You can arrange access to our secure website through your SQA co-ordinator. Any materials downloaded from our secure website must be stored securely and treated as confidential.

Extra support to help you deliver your courses

Continuing professional development (CPD)

We will continue to offer subject-specific CPD support at a local authority, independent school or college level, subject to request. This involves an experienced SQA appointee providing advice and guidance on any areas of concern that are not already addressed by the Understanding Standards programme or disseminated by nominees.

Please note that CPD requests should be made by the appropriate representative from the local authority, independent school or college. For each request we will agree with the representative the content to be covered and the most appropriate way to deliver the support, eg in person, by webinar or by video conference/teleconference.

CPD requests can be made at www.sqa.org.uk/cpdfom

Stay informed

Subscribe to Centre News

Our weekly Centre News newsletter contains the latest news and updates for centres delivering SQA qualifications. It also includes subject-specific news and a regular reminder of key dates during the session.

To subscribe, visit <http://mailer.sqa.org.uk>

Visit your subject pages

Make sure you regularly visit your subject pages, where you can access documents and assessment support materials for your courses, Verification Key Messages and information on coursework. You will also find the latest news updates for your courses in the 'Updates and announcements' section.

Visit www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects

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Contact us

For centre enquiries, please contact our Customer Support Team:

Tel: 0303 333 0330

Fax: 0345 213 5000

E-mail: mycentre@sqa.org.uk
