

Childcare and Development

The Qualifications Team

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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

Childcare and Development is available at Higher level only.

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 centres consistently apply the specified assessment conditions for coursework. 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 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.

Further information and guidance

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 comment 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 are 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 2016–17 are available on the [Childcare and Development subject page](#). You can access them from the 'Verification and Course Reports' tab in the 'Assessment support' section.

The reports provide comments on good practice for assessment approaches and for making assessment judgements. Brief examples of candidates' work which meet the assessment standard are also included to show good practice for individual assessment standards.

Additional CPD support

Where any particular areas of concern are identified, which are not addressed by our support materials, we will offer free continuing professional development (CPD) training. This is subject to request and provided by our subject implementation manager, Rae Little. To find out more about this service visit our [CPD page](#).

Skills for Work Courses — National 4 and 5

Following a scoping and consultation exercise, the Skills for Work: Early Learning and Childcare courses (previously Early Education and Childcare) have been revised and updated to reflect current and best practice. The three mandatory units of the course follow the same principles of Child Development, Play and Working in Early Learning but reflect some of the changes which have happened in the early learning and childcare sector. There is still an optional unit for centres to select which makes up the National 4 and 5 Skills for Work courses.

The unit specifications for Skills for work: Early Learning and Childcare will be available to download from our [NQ Unit Search](#) shortly. The units are as follows:

National 4

Mandatory units	Optional units
Child Development	Care of Children
Play in Early Learning and Childcare	Contemporary Families
Working in Early Learning and Childcare	Maintenance of a Safe Environment for Children

National 5

Mandatory units	Optional units
Child Development and Health	Care and Feeding of Children and Young People
Play in Early Learning and Childcare	Contemporary Families
Working in Early Learning and Childcare	Introduction to First Aid

The assessment support packs will be available in due course. A launch event will be held in January 2018 and further details will be issued in order for you to book a place.

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