

Drama

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

Units that were previously part of National 5 courses

The units that were previously part of National 5 courses are now freestanding units at SCQF level 5. They can no longer be used to contribute to the achievement of a National 5 course.

We will remove all references to National 5 courses from the unit specifications, unit support notes and unit assessment support packs in due course, and the unit support notes will be added to the unit specifications as an appendix. The unit specifications will also be relocated to a new freestanding units web page for each subject.

Further information on the timescales for this will be provided in our weekly Centre News newsletter.

Changes to assessment in National 5

The National 5 Drama course is now assessed through the following components:

Component	Marks	Scaled mark
Question paper	60 marks	40
Performance	60 marks	60

The question paper has been extended by 20 marks to ensure it samples a greater amount of course content, following the removal of units.

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 the specified assessment conditions for coursework are consistently applied in all centres. 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:

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- [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.

Changes to documents

Revised National 5 documents and assessment support materials

Following the removal of units and unit assessments from the National 5 Drama course, we have strengthened the course assessment to ensure it assesses the full content of the course.

We have published the revised course specification and revised assessment support materials for the National 5 course, which detail the requirements of the revised course assessments from session 2017–18 onwards. The documents are available from the National 5 subject web pages at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects. Further information on the changes to documents and assessment support materials is provided below.

Course specification

In April 2017, we published a revised course specification which provided detailed information about the National 5 course and course assessment, including the conditions of assessment that must be followed. The revised document was produced by merging the previous course specifications, course assessment specifications and general assessment information into a single, streamlined document. Course support notes have been added to the course specification as an appendix.

The National 5 Drama course specification is available on the [National 5 Drama web page](#).

Specimen question paper

Twenty marks were added to the specimen question paper.

Section 1 was expanded to include evaluation of other (questions (3(a) and (b))). Section 2 was expanded to include further questions on responding to a stimulus, to test knowledge on conventions, staging, form and structure, audience response, and voice and movement skills (questions 5, 7(a), 7(b), 9(b) and 10) .

All other questions were included in the previous version of this specimen question paper. The revised specimen question paper is available from the [National 5 Drama web page](#).

Coursework assessment task

The coursework assessment task document for the performance component is available from the [National 5 Drama web page](#).

Changes to Advanced Higher coursework

Minor changes have been made to the wording of the detailed marking instructions, to further clarify the differences between the band descriptors in section C.

Supportive resources

National 5 CPD webinars

To help teachers and lecturers prepare for the changes to assessment in the National 5 course, we ran a series of subject-specific continuing professional development (CPD) webinars that focused on the requirements of the course assessment.

The National 5 Drama webinar is available to view on our website and be accessed from the **CPD webinar/audio and support** tab on the [National 5 Drama web page](#).

Q&A document on the changes to assessment

During the question and answer section of the National 5 webinars, we received a number of questions about the changes to assessment. We have published a Q&A document that provides answers to the questions asked during the webinar, as well as some of the most frequently asked questions we have received from teachers and lecturers. You will be able to access the Q&A document from the [National 5 Drama web page](#).

Understanding Standards materials

Candidate evidence, along with commentaries explaining the marks awarded, are available for the following levels and components on our secure site:

National 5 Drama	Performance
Higher Drama	Performance
Advanced Higher Drama	Performance
Advanced Higher Drama	project — dissertation

Candidate evidence and commentaries for Higher Drama **question papers** are available from the [SQA Understanding Standards website](#).

Common questions

The common questions documents for Drama will be updated and republished in November 2017. This document will be available from the [Drama subject page](#).

Centre News will inform centres on the publication date for this document.

Course reports

We strongly recommend that you read the annual course reports for the subject 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

Further information and guidance

2018 Drama external assessment timetable and year planner

February to April 2018	The visiting assessment period for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Drama will run from 12 February 2018 to 27 April 2018 .
May 2018	11 May 2018 is the SQA uplift date for the Advanced Higher Drama project — dissertation. This coursework is marked by SQA.
June 2018	Friday 1 June 2018 (afternoon) Question paper examination for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National 5 Drama• Higher Drama

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