



National
Qualifications

Accounting Assignment General assessment information

This pack contains general assessment information for centres preparing candidates for the assignment Component of Higher Accounting Course assessment.

It must be read in conjunction with the specific assessment task for this Component of Course assessment, which may only be downloaded from SQA's designated secure website by authorised personnel.

Valid from session 2014/15 and until further notice

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Introduction

This is the general assessment information for the Higher Accounting assignment.

This assignment is worth 50 marks out of the total of 150 marks for the Course assessment. The Course will be graded A-D.

Marks for all Course Components are added up to give a total Course assessment mark which is then used as the basis for grading decisions.

This is one of two Components of Course assessment. The other Component is a question paper.

This document describes the general requirements for the assessment of the assignment Component for this Course. It gives general information and instructions for assessors.

It must be read in conjunction with the assessment task for this Component of Course assessment.

Equality and inclusion

This Course assessment has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the assessment arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment in this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

What this assessment covers

This assignment is worth 50 marks out of the total of 150 marks for the Course assessment.

The assessment will assess the skills, knowledge and understanding specified for the assignment in the *Course Assessment Specification*. These are:

- ◆ researching and selecting appropriate data
- ◆ making appropriate use of spreadsheets and word processing applications
- ◆ completing calculations with accuracy
- ◆ comparing and analysing a range of accounting information
- ◆ making decisions based on the analysis
- ◆ preparing a report outlining reasons for the decisions taken

Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of this assessment is to generate evidence for this Component of the added value of this Course by means of an assignment.

The assignment will give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate IT skills through using IT applications for accounting purposes. It will also sample accounting knowledge and understanding and the ability to analyse and make decisions.

The assignment brief will be based on a specific accounting scenario, and will give candidates the opportunity to apply their accounting skills, knowledge and understanding and make appropriate use of IT. They will perform calculations, compare and analyse accounting information, make decisions based on their analysis and present findings in a short report.

Assessment overview

The assignment will require candidates to work through a series of tasks to prepare accounting information and financial statements using IT applications. Candidates will be required to perform calculations, compare and analyse accounting information, make decisions based on their analysis and present findings in a report. This will be completed by integrating, where appropriate, knowledge of financial and management accounting principles and by using appropriate analytical accounting techniques.

The assignment will make appropriate use of spreadsheets. Candidates will be required to enter data with accuracy, and select and use appropriate formulae, formatting and printing functions to present information and accurately complete all tasks.

The assignment will draw on the skills, knowledge and understanding from the Course and each of these elements could be assessed. It may draw from only one Unit or a combination of two/three Units. The assignment will, therefore, have a different emphasis every year.

In order to plan their delivery of the Course, centres will be given advance notification each year of the main topic areas that the assignment will cover. It is anticipated that the topic areas covered in the assignment will not be covered in depth in the question paper.

Assessment conditions

Assessors must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work.

Candidates must carry out the assessment within the period of time specified by SQA. Evidence which meets the requirements of this assignment should be produced under supervised conditions in centres in no more than three hours. (Additional time for printing is permitted.)

Assessors must ensure that the three-hour time limit is not exceeded and that candidate evidence is submitted by the due date in the year in which the assignment is completed. Candidates may complete the assignment over several short periods of time, or fewer longer periods of time. For example, three x one-hour blocks or one x three-hour block could be set aside for candidates to complete the assignment. This is a centre decision.

During this assessment, candidates should have access to the following resources:

- ◆ electronic files supplied by SQA to support the assignment
- ◆ spreadsheet software

This is a closed-book assessment. Candidates should not have access to reference materials during the assignment.

Once the assessment has begun, candidates must work independently. Clarification may be sought by candidates regarding the wording of instructions for the assessment if they find them unclear. In this case, the clarification should normally be given to the whole class.

The assignment will be conducted under a high degree of supervision. This means that candidates must be in direct sight of the assessor (or other responsible person) during the period of the assessment and candidates must not communicate with each other.

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

- ◆ Original printouts of each candidate's IT tasks, clearly showing the task number, as well as the candidate's name and centre.

General Marking Instructions

In line with SQA's normal practice, the following general marking instructions are addressed to the marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for Course assessment.

Evidence will be submitted to SQA for external marking.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

General Marking Principles for the assignment

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to this assignment. These principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must always be assigned in line with these General Marking Principles and the Detailed Marking Instructions for this assessment.
- (b) Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.

Treatment of errors

Guidance on the treatment of errors, such as extraneous items, arithmetic errors and consequential errors are provided in the Detailed Marking Instructions.

Layouts

Layouts in the Detailed Marking Instructions are provided for illustrative purposes only. Candidates should not be penalised for using appropriate alternative layouts.

Consequential errors

Consequential errors should be taken into account. Candidates should receive credit for following the correct accounting processes and spreadsheet formula.

Formulae

It is possible for candidates to use a variety of different formulae to resolve the problem and provide the information needed in the spreadsheet. Marks will be awarded where a formulae has been used that provides the correct answer, the formulae provided in the marking instructions is not the only correct answer.

Printouts

Candidates are clearly directed, within the instructions, as to the printing requirements. Where a printout for a task is missing, marks will be awarded on any available alternative printout.

International Accounting Standards

With the introduction of the new Higher Accounting specification revised IAS terminology will be used in the preparation of financial statements. However candidates using the traditional approach and terminology in these questions will be rewarded. In addition centres need to be aware of the requirements of IAS 1 which specifies the presentation of accounts and the changes in the treatment of proposed dividends.

In order to make this new specification relevant and current the preparation of an appropriation account will, in future, be replaced by a statement of changes in equity. Only dividends that have been approved will be included in final accounts, with any proposed dividends no longer being shown in the statements.

Detailed Marking Instructions for the assignment

Detailed marking instructions are provided in the *Course Assessment Task* document.

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

Security and confidentiality

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