



National
Qualifications

Economics

Assignment

General assessment information

This pack contains general assessment information for centres preparing candidates for the assignment Component of National 5 Economics Course assessment.

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

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Contents

Introduction	1
What this assessment covers	2
Assessment	3
General Marking Instructions	6

Introduction

This is the general assessment information for National 5 Economics assignment.

This assignment is worth 30 marks. The marks contribute 30% of the overall 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 assessment contributes 30% of the total marks for the Course.

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

- ◆ selecting an appropriate economic topic and choosing a particular area of this topic to focus on
- ◆ researching and gathering suitable economic data/information, relevant to the area of the economic topic, from a range of sources
- ◆ applying knowledge and understanding of economic concepts to explain and analyse the key features of the topic
- ◆ drawing valid economic conclusions and/or recommendations relating to the area of the topic based on the evidence gathered
- ◆ producing an economic report using economic terminology which clearly communicates findings

Assessment

Purpose

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

The assignment will address challenge and application by assessing the candidate's ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding from across the Course. The assignment will require candidates to apply their planning, research, analytical, evaluative and communication skills by producing a report based on an economic topic of their choice.

Assessment overview

The economics assignment is designed to allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to work independently and will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow personalisation and choice in the economic topic chosen. The topic should be current so that up-to-date research material can be obtained.

There are two stages to completing this assignment.

- ◆ Researching sources of information relating to the chosen topic, selecting the appropriate information to use from these sources and analysing the information in preparation for the second stage.
- ◆ Producing a report based on the evidence of the research findings using given headings.

Marks for the report will be awarded for:

- ◆ Introduction – 4 marks
- ◆ Research sources – 6 marks
- ◆ Viewpoints – 4 marks
- ◆ Analysis and interpretation – 8 marks
- ◆ Conclusions/recommendations – 4 marks
- ◆ Economic theory – 4 marks

Assessors should provide reasonable guidance in supporting candidates in selecting a suitable topic around which to base their research, and to the likely availability and accessibility of resources for their chosen topic.

Some appropriate topics are provided in the table below for guidance.

Examples of economic study could include:	Examples of a topic to focus on could include:
Markets	Why is there an increased demand for the produce at a local farmers market?
Government finance	How have local government cuts in spending affected local businesses?
Local economy	How does the Edinburgh Festival affect the Edinburgh economy?

Assessment conditions

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

The assignment will have to be carried out over a period of time. However, candidates should start at an appropriate point in the Course. This will normally be when they have completed most of the work on the Units in the Course.

Candidates must undertake the assignment independently although reasonable assistance can be given to the candidates by the assessor during certain stages in the process. If any candidates require more than what is deemed reasonable assistance they may not be ready for assessment.

This assignment has two stages and the conditions relating to the conducting of the assessment varies at each of these stages.

Stage one – research, analysis and preparation for stage two

This stage should be carried out in open conditions. During this stage there are no restrictions on the resources which candidates can access.

Although candidates should be given sufficient time to carry out their research, analysis and preparation for producing their report, it is recommended that this stage be completed within a notional time period of 3-4 hours.

Reasonable assistance may be provided to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates but can also be given to candidates on an individual basis. When reasonable assistance is given on a one-to-one basis in the context of something the candidate has already produced or demonstrated, there is a danger it becomes support for assessment and assessors need to be aware that this may be going beyond reasonable assistance.

During this stage, reasonable assistance may include:

- ◆ Advising candidates on the choice of a topic/area to research
- ◆ Advising candidates on possible sources of information
- ◆ Clarifying instructions/requirements of the assignment
- ◆ Feedback on interim progress

Although this stage is completed under some supervision and control, it is possible for candidates to complete part of this stage outwith the learning and teaching setting. Assessors should put in place mechanisms to authenticate the candidate's work and ensure that plagiarism has not taken place. For example:

- ◆ Regular checkpoint/progress meetings with candidates
- ◆ Short spot-check personal interviews
- ◆ Checklists which record activity/progress
- ◆ Photographs, film or audio evidence

Stage two – producing the report

This stage should be carried out under a high degree of supervision. Candidates must not communicate with each other and must be in sight of the assessor during the time they are producing their report. This stage should be completed in no more than one hour.

During the report production stage, candidates will be permitted to access the following specified resources which must be attached as an appendix to the report:

- ◆ no more than two single-sided sheets of A4 which can be annotated.

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

- ◆ The report produced by the candidate
- ◆ Any appendices to support the report. Examples may include:
 - Statistical, graphical or numerical data
 - Survey results
 - Interview questions and/or responses
 - Questionnaire and/or results
 - List of internet search results
 - Newspaper articles or extracts of newspaper articles
 - Notes taken from a visit or talk
 - Notes taken from a written or audiovisual source

General Marking Instructions

General marking principles for National 5 Economics assignment

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

Marks for each candidate response must always be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed Marking Instructions for this assessment.

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.

In producing their economic report, candidates will be awarded marks for specific skills, knowledge and understanding. These marks should be recorded appropriately by the assessor.

Introduction

Marks will be awarded to candidates for stating the purpose of the economic report and giving some detailed background information on the choice of the topic, based on some research.

Research sources

Marks will be awarded for the research sources evidenced with evaluative comments. At least two sources must be used to gain maximum marks.

Viewpoints

Marks will be awarded for discussing the economic topic from different viewpoints, including the merits of the viewpoints. At least two viewpoints must be discussed to gain full marks.

Analysis and interpretation

Marks will be awarded for analysis and interpretation of the research evidence of the findings and economic reasoning.

Conclusions/recommendations

Marks will be awarded for drawing appropriate conclusions and/or recommendations from the research findings.

Economic theory

Marks will be awarded for expressing relevant economic theory relating to the chosen topic. This theory will permeate throughout the report.

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Amendments to Marking Instructions.	Qualifications Manager	September 2014
1.2	'Conclusions' changed to 'conclusions/recommendations' or 'conclusions and/or recommendations' throughout the document.	Qualifications Manager	September 2016

Security and confidentiality

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