



# **Guidance for Producing and Quality Assuring Items, Question Papers and Marking Instructions**

**National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications  
from 2014 onwards**

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# Contents

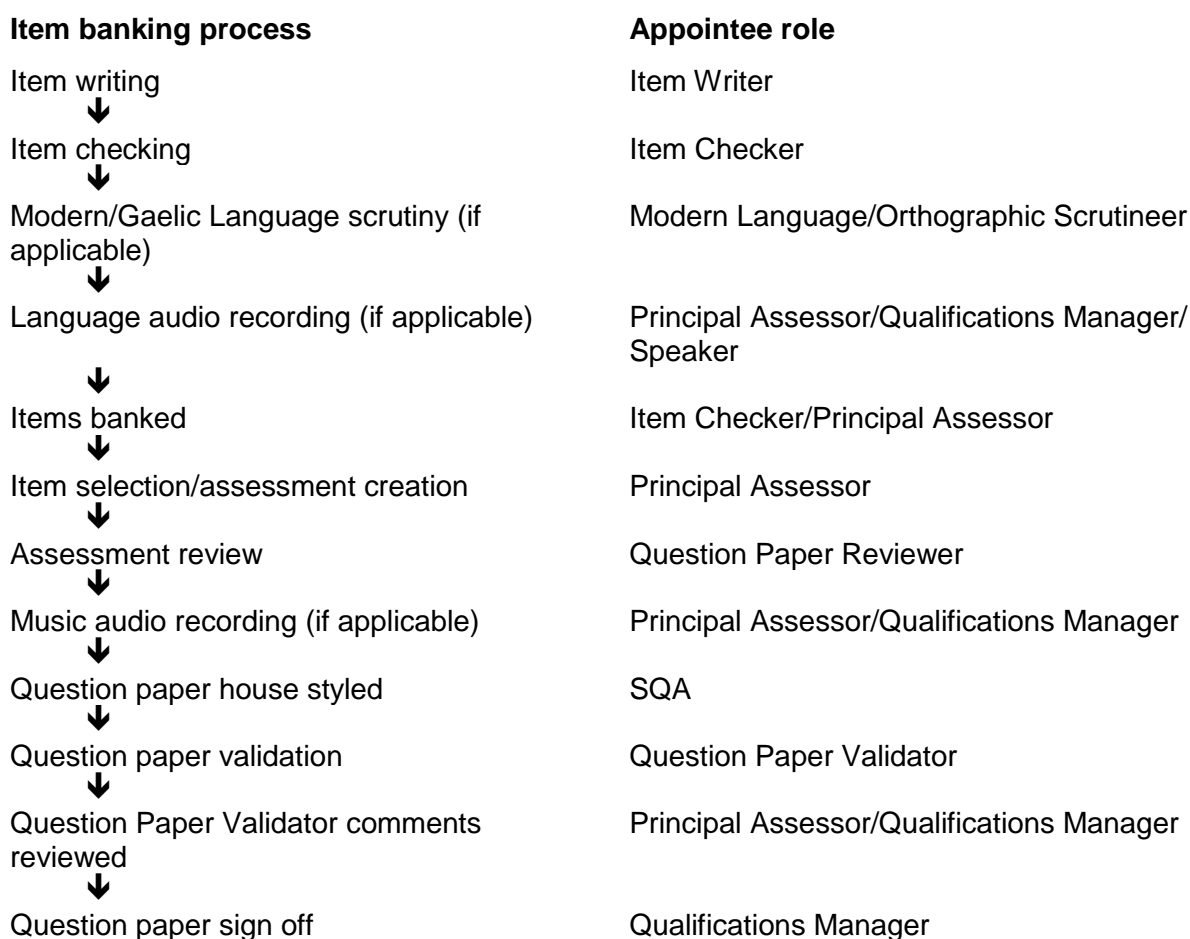
1	Appointee roles	2
2	Security of confidential materials	3
3	Item writing and checking	5
	3.1 Item specification	6
	3.2 Validity	8
	3.3 Accessibility — readability of items	9
	3.4 Marking instructions	23
	3.5 Artwork	26
	3.6 Audio	27
	3.7 Sources and copyright	27
	3.8 Equality and inclusion	29
4	The role of the Principal Assessor in selecting items for a question paper	34
5	Question paper review	35
6	Question paper validation	36
7	The role of the PA in creating general marking principles	37
8	The role of the PA in maintaining national standards	39
9	Key contacts	40
	Appendix A: Item Writer and Checker Checklist	41
	Appendix B: Identification of Copyright-protected Material form	44
	Appendix C: Question Paper Reviewer Checklist	46
	Appendix D: Question Paper Validator Checklist	48
	Appendix E: Bloom’s Taxonomy ‘Revised’	48
	Appendix F: Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level descriptors	53
	Appendix G: Examples of the correct use of command words	58

## Introduction

This guidance is for Principal Assessors, Item Writers, Item Checkers, Question Paper Reviewers and Question Paper Validators who are involved with producing SQA question papers.

References in this document to question papers cover all materials used in the question paper production process (items, question papers, marking instructions, recordings, transcripts, etc).

The diagram below shows the key stages involved in the production of question papers.



The remainder of this document provides advice and support to Principal Assessors and appointees involved in the processes listed above.

Should you require further support and advice then please contact your Qualifications Manager (QM) or Qualifications Officer (QO).

# 1 Appointee roles

For an overview of the appointee roles involved in the production of a question paper please follow the links below:

[Principal Assessor \(PA\)](#)

[Item Bank Leader \(IBL\)](#)

[Item Writer](#)

[Item Checker](#)

[Question Paper Reviewer \(QPR\)](#)

[Question Paper Validator \(QPV\)](#)

## 2 Security of confidential materials

### Overview

**You must take every care to maintain strict confidentiality.**

All confidential materials that are part of the question paper production process (items, question papers, marking instructions, recordings, transcripts etc), must be kept strictly confidential. Their contents must not be divulged to any unauthorised person.

We appreciate that knowledge of the contents of future question papers can place teachers in a difficult position. However, it is expected that all those involved in item writing and question paper compilation will take every precaution not to make use of such knowledge in the course of their other duties. In the interest of fairness to all candidates, everyone involved in the preparation of items and question papers must exercise the utmost discretion.

If there is any suggestion of a possible breach of confidentiality occurring in relation to question papers, the Principal Assessor must submit a report to SQA's Assessment Development and Delivery Operations Manager without delay (see page 40 for contact details). SQA will then decide if any action is necessary. All potential breaches of security will be logged. Although a particular incident may not result in a question paper being replaced, it is important to note this information in case of any future developments.

### Control of confidential materials

#### Item Writers, Item Checkers and Principal Assessors

**You must not make photocopies or electronic copies of confidential material at any stage of the process.**

Items will be written and checked using secure online software called ContentProducer and question papers will be created using secure online software called ItemBank. Consequently, you do not need to save items, question papers or marking instructions to PC/laptop/notebook/tablet or removable media such as a CD-ROM or USB drive.

If accessing ContentProducer or ItemBank over a wireless network (WiFi), please ensure that it is secured by a passcode (using WPA or WPA2-PSK security protocols). Passwords used to access ContentProducer and ItemBank should be a minimum of 8 alpha (mixed case) and numeric characters.

At no time during the question paper production process must e-mail or web forums be used to discuss or transfer confidential materials regarding question paper content. ContentProducer and ItemBank have been specifically designed to enable this type of communication within a secure online environment.

### **Question Paper Reviewers and Principal Assessors**

Paper copies of question papers and marking instructions will be sent to you before the question paper review meeting to give you time to prepare comments.

Prior to and during the question paper review meeting, whether in SQA's offices or elsewhere, please take extra care to ensure that no unauthorised person sees the question papers or has access to them. At no time should confidential material be left unattended in vehicles or meeting rooms. It is everyone's duty to ensure that all confidential material is returned to the Qualifications Manager/Officer at the end of the meeting.

If, for any reason, any confidential materials are retained by the Principal Assessor after the meeting, these must be returned to the Assessment Development and Delivery — NQ Assessment team:

- ◆ in person during normal working hours, or
- ◆ by **Royal Mail Special Delivery**.

The Principal Assessor must not hand papers to security or reception staff at any of SQA's offices or to any SQA staff other than those in the Assessment Development and Delivery — NQ Assessment team.

### 3 Item writing and checking

Item writing will be carried out independently using secure online software called ContentProducer. Subject-specific training and software training will be provided.

Item checking will either be carried out remotely using ContentProducer or by a checking meeting. Paper copies of items will not be issued to PAs, Item Writers or Item Checkers before a checking meeting. PAs and Item Checkers should use ContentProducer to capture their comments before the meeting. The items and comments will then be shown on-screen during the checking meeting to facilitate discussions. Changes will be made electronically to items during this meeting. Subject-specific training and software training will be provided.

Item Writers and Item Checkers are responsible for ensuring that items and marking instructions are of the required quality.

The following key points must be considered when item writing and checking:

<b>Item specification</b>	<b>Does the content of the item match the requirements set out in the item specification?</b>
<i>Validity</i>	<i>Is the item free of unintended problems, which might assess something other than that specified or make it unnecessarily difficult?</i>
<i>Accessibility</i>	<i>Is the language/layout accessible to candidates?</i>
<i>Marking instructions</i>	<i>Will the item elicit the response expected in the marking instructions and are marks awarded for what the item is intended to assess?</i>
<i>Reliability</i>	<i>Are the item and marking instructions clear and unambiguous?</i>
<i>Artwork</i>	<i>Are images included within the item appropriate/helpful?</i>
<i>Copyright</i>	<i>Does the item contain any material that the writer has not created (copyright-protected material)? If so, is it essential or would an alternative fit the purpose just as well?</i>
<i>Equality and inclusion</i>	<i>Do the item and marking instructions comply with SQA guidelines on equality and inclusion?</i>

Pages 6–33 of this document give more detailed guidance on each of the areas mentioned above. The sections on artwork and copyright are only applicable to Item Writers.

Appendix A is a checklist for Item Writers and Checkers to use when developing items.

In addition to the guidance and checklists provided, it is useful to use the specimen question paper and/or previous years' papers as exemplars of the quality, standard and format expected.

### 3.1 Item specification

Item Writers receive an item specification for each item they have to write. An item specification is the 'contract' that must be adhered to when writing an item. Item specifications typically follow this format:

- ◆ item specification number
- ◆ section of question paper (if appropriate)
- ◆ content or topic
- ◆ detail or sub-topic (if appropriate)
- ◆ number of marks/marks range
- ◆ marking instructions (if appropriate)

Item specifications should be used by both Item Writers and Item Checkers as an initial check that items are fit for purpose.

Examples of some item specifications are shown below.

#### Example 1

Item spec no.	Section of question paper	Content	Marks range
4	A2 – Stress	Question based on biological processes in stress	8 or 10
5	A2 – Stress	Question based on origins and sources of stress	8 or 10
6	A2 – Stress	Question based on short- and long-term effects of stress on physical and mental health	8 or 10

#### Example 2

Item spec no.	Section of question paper	Topic	Sub-topic	Marks range
1	Section I	Data representation	Representation of positive numbers in binary using examples up to and including eight bits	1–2
2	Section I	Data representation	Advantages of using binary numbers	1–2
3	Section I	Data representation	Description of floating-point representation of real numbers using the terms mantissa and exponent	1–2



### Example 3

Item spec no.	Content	Marking instructions	Marks
1	<p>1 Produce questions 1 to 4 of the question paper. Each question should be divided into parts and should consist of both multiple choice* and short answer questions**.</p> <p>2 Identify suitable excerpts for each question, supply SQA with mp3 files of the excerpts and information on track title, composer and performer. Audio excerpts must cover a range of styles. <b>Ideally, one of these styles should be Scottish.</b></p> <p>*Multiple choice questions must be in the form: select 1 correct answer from 4 options or 2 correct answers from 5 options.</p> <p>**Short answers questions will require one or two words, or a phrase.</p> <p>15 marks = multiple choice and 5 marks = short answer</p>	<p>Marking instructions must include expected answers in bulleted format, and any additional guidance (if appropriate)</p>	20

## 3.2 Validity

Consider the following points:

- 1 The type of task.** Check that the type of task is appropriate to the specification (eg demonstration of knowledge and understanding, interpretation, evaluation, analysis or synthesis, and whether the candidate is asked to describe, explain, compare and contrast). For more information on assessment instruments and question types please see SQA's *Guide to Assessment* (June 2008, under review).
- 2 The use of contexts/case studies.** The use of contexts and case studies in questions can be useful, but over-lengthy contextualisation becomes a test of reading or a distractor for candidates. Remember that a familiar or 'real world' context can increase the chance that candidates will try to answer using irrelevant general knowledge rather than subject-specific knowledge. Any case study should contain only information relevant to the question being asked.
- 3 The breadth of focus.** Take care that the focus of the question is appropriate, eg in Languages papers the focus can vary between questions which require understanding of phrases, sentences or paragraphs.
- 4 The language used.** Check that the language used in the questions is clear and unambiguous (see pages 9–20 for more information).
- 5 The question structure.** Don't structure questions in such a way that the correct answer depends on the candidate answering a previous question correctly. Is breaking the question into parts appropriate support?
- 6 The number of marks available.** Is the mark allocation appropriate to the amount of information provided in the response, and is it clear?
- 7 Answer structure support.** The use of question/answer booklets can help ensure that candidates attempt each part of each question, and give a clear indication of how much writing is required. For example, in some subjects the first few words of the response are given and where the candidate has to produce a table, the table may be provided.
- 8 The use of reference material.** Only use reference diagrams where they help candidates answer the question. Questions are more demanding if a candidate has to refer to a range of sources and gather information from them.
- 9 The question layout.** Candidates will be affected by the appearance of a question, so think about how it is presented on the paper (see pages 21–22 for more information). Any information which is necessary to answer the question must be kept separate from the actual question. Where a question requires the candidate to consider several sources before answering, include directions to help the candidate focus on the relevant information.
- 10 The match between the question type and the marking instructions.** If a question is open-ended then the marking instructions must allow for a range of valid answers (see pages 23–24 for more information), some deserving more marks than others.

### 3.3 Accessibility — readability of items

All assessments must be easy to read and the language used must not be a barrier for candidates. This applies to all subjects, at all levels and to all types of written assessments.

The readability of an item depends on:

- ◆ the language — sentence structure and vocabulary
- ◆ the layout — presentation and organisation of material

Consider the following points:

#### 3.3.1 Sentence structure

Keep sentences clear and concise. This does not mean you have to over-simplify your question. It means writing with the reader in mind and with the right tone. Where you are unable to avoid long sentences, try to make them as straightforward as possible. You can create difficulties for the reader by using complex or unfamiliar sentence structures. For example, the sentence below is long, but it is easy to read because of its simple structure.

*The rebels came down from their camps in the hills and brought with them their wives and children, their tents and their food supplies, and everything else that they needed for the long winter.*

Where there is a long sentence with a complex structure candidates may lose the meaning partway through. This is particularly true when the subject–verb–object order is disrupted by subordinate clauses. As a general rule, the more complex the information, the simpler the sentence structure should be.

For example, the sentence below could be difficult to read because of its complex structure:

*If a student were provided with three black painted metal rods, one of which was known to be made of brass, one of magnetised steel and one of unmagnetised steel, describe how, without scratching the black paint, the student would identify each of the rods.*

becomes:

*You have been given three black painted metal rods. One rod is made of brass, one is made of magnetised steel and one is made of unmagnetised steel. You are not allowed to scratch the black paint. Describe how you could correctly identify each of the rods.*

#### Sequence

The information in a sentence should be presented in the sequence of events as they actually occur. For example:

*The leaves were detached from the plant after having been covered with a black paper bag for 48 hours.*

becomes:

*The leaves of the plant were covered with a black paper bag for 48 hours. The leaves were then cut off.*

Even short questions can be difficult to understand, for example:

*What kind of cleaning agent will remove the hard-water stains left by a dripping tap on a wash-basin?*

The following redraft is simpler. It follows a logical pictorial flow. The question has been separated from the information by starting on a new line and leaving space between them.

*A dripping tap leaves a hard-water stain on a wash-basin.*

*What kind of cleaning agent will remove them?*

### 3.3.2 Command words

Command words<sup>1</sup> are the verbs or verbal phrases used in questions and tasks to ask learners to demonstrate that they have learnt specific skills, knowledge or understanding. Examples are ‘describe’, ‘investigate’, ‘how...’.

The following sources should be used when considering command words within items:

- ◆ SQA’s List of command words and guidance, detailed below
- ◆ Course and Unit Specifications (and Outcomes, definitions and descriptions within them)
- ◆ Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy (see Appendix E)
- ◆ SCQF level descriptors (see Appendix F)

To achieve clarity and consistency across Courses and levels, the following command words should only be used when the skill, knowledge or understanding being assessed fits the explanation given.

Other command words can be used as necessary, but please see the ‘think again’ list.

Command word	Explanation
Analyse	Identify parts, the relationship between them, and their relationships with the whole. Draw out and relate implications. Analyse data (possibly including calculations as well as a conclusion).
Calculate	Determine a number from given facts, figures, or information.
Compare	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the similarities and/or differences between (for instance) things, methods, or choices.
Conclude	Draw conclusions based on a text, scenario or set of information or

<sup>1</sup> This guidance does not apply to Gaelic and foreign languages unless the question is phrased in English.

Command word	Explanation
	data.
Construct	Make, build or put together an item or arguments.
Describe	Provide a statement or structure of characteristics and/or features. This should be more than an outline or a list. May refer to a concept, process, experiment, situation, or facts.
Determine	Determine a number from given facts, figures, or information.
Discuss	Communicate ideas and information on a subject (in writing or orally). It may be possible to debate two sides of the statement.
Explain	Relate cause and effect and/or make clear the relationships between things.
Explore	Carry out a detailed examination or enquiry or follow a process in order to find out something.
Evaluate	Make a judgement based on criteria. Determine the value of something.
Name	Present in brief form/name. Alternatives can be 'identify', 'list', 'state', 'give'. Please make clear when these are asking for a different response. Do not use them sometimes for different purposes and at other times as equivalent.
Outline	Provide a brief summary of content. More than naming, but not a detailed description.
Predict	Suggest what may happen based on available information.

***Please think again!***

The following question words and command words can cause problems for large groups of candidates, so please make sure that you have avoided misinterpretations or use an alternative.

How	Commonly used for why by Scottish candidates. This does not mean that these candidates will not know the difference between a cause and a method, but they might be at a disadvantage when interpreting the question compared to those who use both words. Possibly replace with 'in which way', 'by which means', 'describe' etc. When used as a modifier, 'how' is less problematic, eg in 'how long'.
Why	Commonly used for 'how'. See above. Consider replacing with 'for which reason(s)', 'what caused' etc.
Write	Is not necessary in question papers and is problematic for candidates who would be disadvantaged by the written mode for longer responses. An alternative is 'give', and in question–answer booklets 'complete' might be used too.
Assess	Use 'evaluate' instead.

### ***Using the list of command words***

The most important piece of advice is to use these command words only as they have been explained in the table and not in any other way.

If, previously, you have used command words that are in the list and assigned a meaning other than that indicated in the list, then you can't continue doing so. You will have to find another command word for your purpose.

When you intend to assess something that matches an explanation in the list, such as 'Draw conclusions based on a text, scenario or set of information or data', you should use the corresponding command word if possible. However, this may not always be best. There are instances when the meaning is conveyed better by another phrase. For instance, the linguistic context of the whole question needs to be taken into account, and additional information in the form of sources, tables, etc can also influence the formulation of the question. In such cases it will be better to use a slight variant of the exact phrase in the list, even when the same meaning is intended as the one explained there, eg 'Which conclusion is offered in the last paragraph?' instead of 'What does the writer conclude?'.

### ***Mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding***

Of course, the form of words used in Course Assessment Specifications, in further information on mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding, and in Unit Specifications needs to be taken into account. Formulations in questions need to be consistent with these documents.

The list and the explanations cover only a small range of what we ask candidates to do. The choice of command word is optional for questions which assess other skills, knowledge and understanding than those explained in the list.

It is of course advisable to use your words as consistently as possible. Try to use command words consistently for the same purpose. Do not use different command words for the same purpose merely to avoid repetition.

### ***Please think again!***

The guidance asks you to think very carefully about the use of 'how', 'why', 'write', and 'assess'. In particular the use of 'how' is problematic, because in parts of Scotland 'how' means 'why' as well as 'how'. You need to make sure therefore that any phrase containing one of these words can only have one and the same meaning for all candidates. Having used and marked 'how' in previous papers as asking for a method does not provide enough clarity. On the other hand, the focus of related questions and the nature of context material might make it clear enough that 'explain how' in that particular context refers to a process, not a reason. When in doubt, ask appointees teaching in the West of Scotland how their candidates would understand the specific question.

Below are a number of examples which exemplify the various ways in which the command words 'why' and 'how' may cause confusion, and how they should be applied.

### **Example 1**

#### *Question*

- (a) (i) Complete the sub-system diagram shown in Figure Q1 by adding the system boundary.  
(ii) Describe why a system boundary should be included in a sub-system diagram.

#### *Marking instruction*

- (ii) To separate the outside world from input, process and outputs.

#### *Comment*

Although 'describe' might suggest that the question is about the way a system boundary could be included, the fact that the boundary has already been added in the previous question is probably enough for candidates to be sure a reason is required. Therefore, in this example the use of 'why' is appropriate.

### **Example 2**

#### *Question*

Give two examples of how corrosion of the steel adds to the cost of operating the factory.

#### *Marking instruction*

Any two from the idea of cost of:

- ◆ protection
- ◆ repair
- ◆ replacement parts
- ◆ additional labour
- ◆ lost production

#### *Comment*

It would be easy to read 'how' in this question as 'why', but that would probably not have led to different answers. Candidates may have spent some time wondering what exactly was meant. Alternative wording such as 'Give two reasons why' could have avoided the ambiguity.

### **Example 3**

#### *Question*

How did road engineers overcome the problems caused by the landscape between Junction 30 (5726) and Junction 32 (5434)?

#### *Marking instruction*

Bridges had to be built to cross rivers and existing main roads (2) eg 582300 (1).  
Crossing higher ground cuttings had to be made, eg 576284 (1).  
On the flood plain at 580306 an embankment had to be built (1).  
Woodland had to be cut down at 577312 (1).

#### *Comment*

Because the question is about overcoming problems, the focus is clearly on the way this has been solved, not on the reasons why road engineers built a planned junction.

### 3.3.3 Marking instructions

Marking instructions need to be consistent with command words. General guidelines for marking specific types of questions, such as analysis or evaluation questions, need to be consistent with the explanations given in the list. Specific instructions need to show that (most) marks are awarded for the behaviour described in the explanation column, so that when you ask candidates to analyse, you don't award marks for a description.

The following question and marking instruction exemplifies an inconsistency between what is being asked, and what marks are being awarded for.

#### *Question*

At present Wholesome Drinks Ltd uses the following channel of distribution for its goods:

Manufacturer → Wholesaler → Retailer

Identify the advantages to Wholesome Drinks of using this distribution channel. [4]

#### *Marking instruction*

Two advantages from:

Wholesaler buys in ... (*list of four 'advantages'*)  
([2] for each advantage explained)

[4]

#### *Comment*

In this case there is no indication to the candidates that any explanation is required, and the command word phrase 'Identify the advantages' — giving no indication of the number of 'advantages' to be identified — strongly implies that none is.

An example of where the command word and marking instructions are consistent is shown below.

#### *Question*

Show how the writer's use of language in lines 20–28 highlights the scale of the media operation at the Sydney Olympic Games.

In your answer you should refer to such features as sentence structure, word choice, imagery. Max 4 marks

#### *Marking instruction (first part):*

Marks will depend on the quality of comment. Insightful comment on one feature could be worth up to 3 marks. For full marks, there must be reference to more than one feature. Reference alone: 0. Mere identification of an image or a feature of sentence structure: 0.

#### *Comment*

If marks had been awarded for reference to any feature, eg 3 marks for naming sentence structure, word choice and imagery and 1 mark for giving a single example for one of these from the text, the marking would have awarded identification of use of language rather than analysis.

**Please see Appendix G for examples of the correct use of command words. Please note that the examples provided are only a selection and are not the only way in which a phrase can be used well.**



### 3.3.4 Language — things to avoid

#### The passive voice/impersonal verbs

The passive form is widely used in question papers, particularly in science or technical subjects because the focus is on the process, not who did it. Some readers might not get the overall idea of what has happened because the natural speech order of the words in a sentence is changed. This can make a sentence impersonal and complex.

An active construction rather than a passive construction should be used. For example:

*Two learners were doing an experiment.*

is easier to read than:

*An experiment was being undertaken by two learners.*

Complexity can be reduced by splitting sentences. For example:

*State two faults in the design of the experiment shown and state in each case how the fault can be corrected.*

becomes:

*There are faults in the design of the experiment shown.  
Identify two of these faults.  
Describe how to correct each fault.*

Verb forms (shorter) should be used instead of the equivalent (but longer) noun forms. For example:

- ◆ 'protect' is easier than 'protection'
- ◆ 'absorb' is easier than 'absorption'.

Therefore,

*What steps can be taken to ensure the protection of steel from rust?*

becomes:

*How can you protect steel from rust?*

### Negative ('not') or partly negative ('only') expressions

If a negative is essential in a question, put it in **bold**. Avoid using two negatives near each other in a sentence as this is likely to be confusing for readers.

### Use/misuse of emphasis

Emphasising important words in bold type can prevent candidates missing or misunderstanding them; however care should be taken that this does not turn into a rule which must always be followed, as can be the case with presenting numbers in bold.

For example:

*(c) In the period from July to October, Fruitizz had reached the Maturity and Saturation stages.*

*Distinguish between these **two** stages.*

*[4]*

The bold '**two**' does not help here, and the word should not only not be in bold but should be omitted altogether.

Sometimes the bold number is even less helpful:

*(iii) Identify and explain **one** piece of legislation that the zoo will have to consider when promoting its services.*

*[3]*

The important phrase here is 'when promoting its services', not the idea of 'one' piece of legislation. Highlighting **promoting its services** might have helped direct candidates away from irrelevant legislation concerning animal welfare or employment.

Another example is:

(d) Give **two** quality control checks that could be carried out during manufacture of the clothes hooks.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

[2]

Here it would have been more helpful to stress either during or manufacture, rather than 'two' — which is clearly indicated by the layout of the answer space.

### Embedding questions in statements

Candidates may be disadvantaged if it is not obvious what the question is actually asking. A good solution is to give the information first, then ask the question in a separate sentence.

For example:

*Which soil would you choose if you wanted to grow most types of vegetable successfully?*

becomes:

*You want to grow many different kinds of vegetables. Which type of soil is best?*

And:

*How has the introduction of manufactured boards to replace wooden boards affected the method of fixing tabletops to frames?*

Is clearer if written as:

*We now use manufactured boards to make table tops.  
Describe how we fix manufactured boards to table frames today.*

### Difficult vocabulary

Item Writers should avoid using words with multiple meanings:

'sound'	may mean	strong	or	noise
'overall'	may mean	general	or	article of clothing
'employed'	may mean	used	or	in work
'present'	may mean	is there	or	a gift

In each of the above cases, the second meaning is more likely to be familiar to candidates with reading difficulties.

The most frequently used word or phrase should be used where possible for non-technical terms (the carrier language); for example 'make', not 'produce', 'use' not 'utilise' and 'need', not 'require'.

### **Abstract language**

Abstract language may be problematic to a range of candidates with poor reading skills, including disabled candidates who have language impairments, are deaf or who have autistic spectrum conditions.

The following words can also be misleading or confusing to candidates:

- ◆ facilities
- ◆ process
- ◆ characteristics

While there might not be simpler alternatives, it is sometimes possible to omit a word with no significant change to the meaning of a question. For example, in the question below, it may be possible to omit the word 'process'.

*What changes occur in the process of fertilisation?*

becomes:

*What changes occur during fertilisation?*

Try to avoid words with double meanings; for example, words like 'overall', 'present', 'stable' and 'key' have two possible meanings, one concrete and one abstract. Bear in mind that less confident readers will tend to give the word its concrete rather than its abstract meaning, as the concrete meaning will probably be more familiar.

For example:

*The local health board plans to conduct a survey into the uptake of...*

Would be clearer worded as:

*The local health board is planning a survey into the uptake of...*

### **Metaphorical language**

Avoid using metaphors. Metaphorical language may be problematic to a range of candidates with poor reading skills including disabled candidates who have language impairments, for example those who are deaf or who have autistic spectrum conditions.

For example:

*Why did the government frown upon...?*

becomes:

*Why did the government object to...?*

And:

*He had the weight of the world on his shoulders.*

becomes:

*He was very worried.*

### **Subject-specific terminology**

Subject-specific terminology will add to the demand of a question or task and should be used only if it is likely to be familiar to well-prepared candidates at the relevant level and is necessary for an understanding of a topic or task. Where it is essential, check that the general language used in the wording of the questions or instructions is kept as simple and clear as possible.

### **Contexts**

As well as ensuring all contexts within assessments reflect the experience of all groups in a balanced way, be aware that over-lengthy contextualisation can become a test of reading rather than a test of subject matter.

The question below is overly complex:

*James Jackson has been a regular guest at the MacIntosh Hotel, staying 2 nights every 2 weeks whilst on business in the town.  
Describe the procedure you would follow when Mr Jackson asks for his usual room booking.*

And could be simplified by removing much of the information which is irrelevant to what is being asked, as below:

*Mr Jackson calls. He is a regular customer and books the same room for 2 nights every fortnight.  
Describe the booking procedure for a regular customer.*

Again, the following question is overly complex with too much information.

*Mrs Jean Pool, who has never been at the hotel before, requests by telephone a twin room for Tuesday of next week, which if available she would like to book. Identify the information you would request from her in addition to that which you would record from Mr Jackson.  
Describe the booking procedure for a new customer.*

By reducing the amount of language, it can be made much more accessible:

*A new customer, Mrs Jean Pool, calls and asks to book a room for next Tuesday.  
Describe the booking procedure for a new customer.*

The use of 'real world' contexts often makes helpful connections for candidates but the context should not dominate.

Think carefully before using real-life contexts. The process of answering such questions may be different to that intended if the case was significant enough for the candidate to remember it, or if their teacher used it as an example in teaching. It may then become a question which tests simple recall.

For example, in a Geography exam an event such as the Indian Ocean tsunami could be used, and ask:

*What caused the loss of life in the affected countries?*

In simple cognitive terms, it is likely that many candidates will have remembered this event and will need no geographical knowledge to answer the question. Emotionally loaded events are remembered more than neutral ones, and recalling them brings back the emotion they experienced at the time. Besides the 'recall' rather than 'understand' effect, this raising of emotional level during an examination may interfere with some candidates' cognitive processes, reducing their level of performance.

Contexts (or words) with excessive emotional content may inhibit candidates' ability to focus on an assessment task, particularly if they have had any personal experience of that kind of emotional event (eg serious illness, bereavement, violence, abuse, house fires, or road accidents). Where the subject demands such references the use of affective language should be limited.

In the following example, asking a candidate to remember an emotional event may negatively impact on their performance:

***Write about** an occasion when **you** had a telephone call giving you unwelcome news.  
Remember to include your **thoughts and feelings**.*

The same can happen even more intensely when they encounter words to which they have a strong emotional response such as references to bereavements or other traumatic experiences. This can potentially block their thinking for a while. For this reason, contexts and sources need to be carefully screened for words that can have an emotional impact to avoid this kind of effect.

### 3.3.5 Layout

The presentation of an item is as important as the language used. This is especially true for those candidates who find reading difficult.

Consider the following points:

#### Rubrics

The rubric of a question should make the purpose of the task clear. Instructions should stand out and, if the question/task is complex, they should be repeated.

#### Question numbering and style

The SQA numbering system is based on the following sequence and style:

- 1 For the stem of the question
  - (a) For associated questions (sub-stem)
    - (i) For questions associated with sub-stem
    - (ii) etc

All figures or sources relating to the question should be labelled and cross-referenced correctly with the text.

Marks should be shown as single/double digit only — no brackets, columns or other annotation (eg KU, AE) should be used.

#### Order of questions

Where a test of knowledge and understanding samples a domain, as a general rule the initial questions should be relatively easy and the more demanding questions should appear near the end. However, questions relating to particular topics should be kept together rather than spread through the test so that candidates can focus on one topic at a time.

#### Spelling and punctuation

- ◆ Check for misspellings, incorrect grammar, and wrong and inconsistent punctuation.
- ◆ Check that all questions finish with a question mark and tasks with a full stop.
- ◆ Check that there is no more than one space between words or after a full stop or colon.
- ◆ Decimal points should be raised (ie, 2·5, not 2.5). The keyboard shortcut for a raised decimal point is Alt0183 (with Num Lock on).
- ◆ Double quotation marks should be used for quotations rather than single quotation marks.
- ◆ Quotes inside quotes should be shown by single quotation marks.
- ◆ Plurals for dates have no apostrophe, eg 1990s not 1990's.

#### Signposts/reading cues

You can use signposts such as bold to emphasise key words and phrases and to help improve the visual appearance of the item (eg Give **two** reasons...).

Italics should be used for subject-specific terminology, for titles of books, newspapers etc.

CAPITALS, headings and sub-headings can also be used.

Do not over-use signposts or they will lose their effectiveness. You should decide on why you are using them at the writing stage and then all Item Writers should use them appropriately and consistently across all items.

You can also use typesetting features such as indentation or boxes to provide reading cues for candidates. Putting important information in a box will focus a candidate's attention on this information.

For example:

*Source A lists some important changes in British coalmining.*

*Source A*

*1842 Underground work by children under ten years of age and women is stopped.*

*1850 New safety rules brought in for all coal mines. Government miners and inspectors introduced.*

*1872 Daily safety inspections introduced for all coal mines.*

### **Artwork**

Artwork such as illustrations, photographs, line graphs, bar charts, pie charts, diagrams and logos, must be accessible to all. Diagrams, data and other resources should be included only if they are essential to the question or task, either because the question involves using the data they contain or they provide support or relevant information for candidates. The inclusion of artwork may create a barrier for some candidates. For example, many sources cannot be converted into Braille or enlarged for visually impaired candidates, and may have to be described in words in the Braille version of the assessment.

Appropriate artwork should be used to support text. For example, candidates should be familiar with the maps and diagrams that you use in the item, ie they should be in the same/similar style as those used in Coursework, standard texts, worksheets or exemplar material.

Diagrams and artwork should be of a high quality, be clearly presented, contain only as much detail as is necessary (although authentic source materials may have to contain some redundant information) and labelled simply, eg Table 1. Artwork should be placed appropriately in relation to the question with consistent space above and below.

Graphs should be clearly labelled with units of measurement displayed on both axes, and background grid lines should be distinct with all points of graph lines clearly readable on the grid.

Photographs may be used for illustration purposes only, but you have to make sure that these do not confuse the candidate — a photograph included only to 'brighten up' the text will often lead the candidate to think that the photograph needs to be taken account of in their answer. In some instances the inclusion of photographs can be seriously misleading.



### 3.4 Marking instructions

Marking instructions should consist of expected answers and additional guidance.

#### Expected answers

This section can include either a full range of acceptable answers or examples of answers that would gain either full or partial credit. It can also include, if appropriate, an explanation of why the examples you have given should receive full or partial credit.

#### Additional guidance

This section should include any additional information that would be of help to Markers. This could include: examples of answers that should not be given credit, explaining why not; advice on dealing with common errors/marketing issues for that particular question; any principle or rationale that a Marker could apply to unanticipated responses to that specific question. Whilst it is important to make the additional guidance as helpful as possible, it is not necessary to try to anticipate every possible response. One or two examples, where appropriate, with a rationale or explanation will be of more help to Markers.

#### General guidance when creating marking instructions

- ◆ Think of a new Marker when you are developing the marking instructions. What information will they need in order to understand fully the marking instructions and apply them to the required standard?
- ◆ For some questions it may be possible to define a very limited number of acceptable responses. If this is the case, list all the acceptable responses and make it clear that these are the only responses to which credit should be given. Only do this when it is completely impossible for candidates to come up with an unintended or unexpected acceptable response.
- ◆ When there is a wide range of potential responses it is important that you avoid the temptation to make a list of all the acceptable responses that you can anticipate. However, it would be helpful to give a few examples of responses that should be given full, partial or no credit. If doing this, you should state explicitly that these are examples only, and that they do not encompass the full range of responses in each category.
- ◆ If you are giving examples, explain why the examples in each category should be given full, partial or no credit. This will provide Markers with a rationale or principle that they can apply when assessing responses not listed in the marking instructions.
- ◆ As a principle, award one mark for each separate piece of information explicitly asked for.
- ◆ No half marks can be awarded.
- ◆ While marking instructions should be as clear and comprehensive as possible, they also need to be flexible enough to help Markers assess unanticipated responses, when applicable. Try to identify the key features of responses which should attract credit; this will be more helpful than a list of examples on its own.

- ◆ For questions where different features of a response attract a specific number of marks, clearly identify the marks associated with each feature, distinguishing between full and partial marks, when appropriate.
- ◆ Use clear and unambiguous English rather than abbreviated notes in the marking instructions.
- ◆ Marking instructions should credit appropriate responses that reflect the diverse background of candidates and the different ways in which they may demonstrate what they know, understand and can do.

For example:

An ICT question may ask candidates to discuss the use of a mouse as an input device.

Visually impaired candidates could better demonstrate their knowledge and understanding by describing the use of a keyboard which provides them with similar access.

Therefore, a more general question about input devices would allow for a broader range of responses. The marking instructions would then be designed to credit a relevant description of a range of input devices, and would then be more likely to accommodate candidates' normal ways of working.

### Examples of expected answers and additional guidance

#### Example 1 (a): Computing

Question		Expected answers	Max mark	Additional guidance
1	a	<p><i>The only answers which should be awarded the mark are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ RAM</li> <li>◆ Random Access Memory</li> </ul>	1	<p><i>The mark should be awarded if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Random Access Memory contains spelling errors</li> <li>◆ capitals are missing, ie ram or random access memory</li> </ul> <p><i>Any incorrect expansion of RAM, eg Raw Accessible Memory, Random Access Module, should not be awarded the mark.</i></p>

**Example 1 (b): Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies**

Question		Expected answers	Max mark	Additional guidance
3	b	<p>Any accurate description of two aspects of Nam Simran, which might include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ it is the practice of trying to remember God at all times</li> <li>◆ it can involve the verbal and/or mental repetition of a name for God/Sat Nam/Waheguru etc</li> <li>◆ some Sikhs use meditation beads while repeating God's name</li> <li>◆ any additional practice associated with Nam Simran</li> </ul> <p>Each aspect described should gain only 1 mark, even if it is described in some detail, because the question specifically asks for a brief description of two aspects of Nam Simran.</p>	2	<p>If the description of a particular aspect contains an error of fact, the mark available should not be awarded, eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ if it involves repeating Guru Nanak's name</li> <li>◆ if it involves remembering God's name five times a day</li> </ul> <p>If an aspect of another Sikh practice is described correctly, eg Sewa, Kirt Karna, Nam Japna, the available mark should not be awarded.</p> <p>The above examples suggest confusion between different Sikh practices/beliefs.</p> <p>Accurate descriptions which include incorrect spelling of Sikh terms should be awarded a mark as the assessment objectives for the Course require candidates to demonstrate knowledge of Sikh practices, not correct spelling of Sikh terms.</p>

Please note that the examples above are illustrative only. They are given as a stimulus to help you think about strategies and information which might be of help to Markers.

### 3.5 Artwork

This section is only applicable to Item Writers.

Artwork includes illustrations, photographs, line graphs, bar charts, pie charts, diagrams and logos. Artwork will normally be black and white. Colour can only be used where it is integral to the question paper (eg Art and Design, Design and Manufacture).

Item Writers may source artwork from:

- ◆ the Shutterstock image library
- ◆ SQA's in-house artists

Alternatively, Item Writers may source artwork themselves. However, please refer to section 3.7 Sources and copyright. SQA reserves the right to alter images sourced by Item Writers.

Note: Images can no longer be sourced from SCRAN as SQA no longer subscribes to this service.

#### Shutterstock image library

If artwork is required within an item, the first thing you should do is search for something suitable in the online image library at [www.shutterstock.com](http://www.shutterstock.com), which holds over 25 million photos, illustrations and graphic images. Instructions on how to insert an image from Shutterstock are provided in the ContentProducer Item Writer Guidance.

#### In-house artists

There are some types of image that Shutterstock can't provide, such as when a very specific picture is required because of the wording in a question. However, we have skilled staff at SQA who can design and create bespoke artwork for you.

Examples of bespoke artwork include:

- ◆ graphs
- ◆ pie charts
- ◆ diagrams
- ◆ specially-made illustrations

Only request bespoke artwork when a more generic graphic cannot meet the needs of the question. Complex bespoke artwork can take up to one week to supply so please take this into account when planning your writing.

Instructions on how to request bespoke artwork are provided in the ContentProducer Item Writer Guidance.

### 3.6 Audio

If the item specification requires you to submit an audio recording you should submit this in .mp3 format. MP3s should be at a bit rate of at least 128 kbps and should be inserted into the item template as an object (see ContentProducer Item Writer Guidance).

### 3.7 Sources and copyright

This section is only applicable to Item Writers.

A source, in this context, is any material which provides candidates with information required to answer a question or information which supplements a question.

Source material may be copyright-protected if it has been created by someone other than the Item Writer, SQA Graphic Artist or it has not been sourced from Shutterstock.

Sources can include:

- ◆ text (eg from newspapers, magazines, novels, textbooks, scientific papers, poems, guidebooks)
- ◆ quotations
- ◆ translations
- ◆ logos
- ◆ brands
- ◆ diagrams
- ◆ maps and map extracts
- ◆ photographs, pictures, paintings or drawings
- ◆ audio and audio-visual material
- ◆ content or screenshots from the internet
- ◆ extracts from software programs

If an item contains source material that is copyright-protected, SQA is required by law to:

- ◆ acknowledge this on the question paper
- ◆ gain copyright clearance so the question paper can be published on our website

You should, as far as possible, try to avoid using material that is copyright-protected. For example, does the question require a branded product? Would a fictional brand or a generic image of the product type be perfectly acceptable? Check [www.shutterstock.com](http://www.shutterstock.com) for alternative images and/or consider requesting bespoke artwork.

If no alternative is available, and the use of copyright-protected material is necessary, you should:

- ◆ insert the content of the source material into the item
- ◆ complete an online Identification of Sources and Copyright-protected Material form in ContentProducer giving SQA information about the image/text and where you sourced it

A copy of the Identification of Sources and Copyright-protected Material form is included in Appendix B for information. The next section highlights questions for Item Writers to consider before using any sources that may be copyright-protected.

## Sources and copyright — Q & A

### 1 What if I'm not sure if the source is copyright-protected?

Even if the item you require is small, or you are not sure whether it is actually copyright-protected, you need to provide SQA with the source information.

### 2 What if I have adapted the source?

If you adapt copyright-protected text significantly (even to the extent that it is not identifiable from the original source) you must still provide the original source.

### 3 Can I use material from newspapers, magazines and books?

If the material is available electronically, you should copy and paste it into the item and complete the online copyright form in ContentProducer. If the material is only available on paper you should scan it or take a photograph of it, check that the image/text is clear, and then insert it into the item. You should then complete the online copyright form in ContentProducer.

### 4. Can I use material sourced from the Internet?

Yes. If using material from the Internet, you must supply the exact URL (web page address) along with the date and time you accessed it. Links from Google, or any other search engine, are not sufficient — you need to go to the relevant page on the actual website and copy the web page address from there.

### 5 Can I source material from Wikipedia?

No. Wikipedia is open-access and can therefore be unreliable and inaccurate. Wikipedia web pages can also be changed or deleted at any time.

### 6 Can I source material from blogs?

No. Authors may not own the copyright and it is difficult for us to identify who the copyright owner really is.

### 7 Are there restrictions on photographs that can be used?

Don't use photographs of children (other than the ones available in the Shutterstock library). This is because parental consent is required.

### 8 Can I use real brand names and company logos?

Don't use brand names where a generic noun will do. For example, you should use the term 'smart phone' or 'mobile phone' instead of specific brands.

Don't use copyright-protected items or brand names in a negative context (for example in a case study depicting a failed business or unsuccessful product).

If you replace a real brand name with a fictional brand name, you also need to fictionalise the context/case study that the name sits within, so that the true brand cannot be identified.

If you need to use a company logo, this must be the official logo from the company's website or publication. Do not crop or amend the logo in any way.

### 3.8 Equality and inclusion

The Equality Act (2010) places clear duties on SQA not to discriminate against people who wish to be or who are candidates for SQA's qualifications because of their disability, race, age, religion or belief, sex, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation (known as the protected characteristics).

All questions, items, tasks and supporting marking instructions for Course assessments should offer all candidates an equal opportunity to demonstrate their attainment. The tasks, the language in which they are presented, any associated illustrative material and the marking criteria should reflect a fair, inclusive view of society.

Therefore, all those involved in assessment production must ensure that all questions, items or tasks and supporting marking instructions pose no unnecessary barriers which could have an adverse impact on candidates on grounds of any of these protected characteristics.

Assessments should also reflect the diverse and changing nature of modern Scotland. All people represented in any assessment materials must reflect the full diversity of Scottish society.

Particular care should be taken when using contexts within questions as they should reflect the experience of all groups in a balanced way. The use of 'real-world' contexts often makes helpful connections for candidates but perceptions of the 'real world' also vary according to candidates' experiences, beliefs and circumstances.

#### **Stereotyping**

All questions, items, tasks and supporting marking instructions for assessments should be free from narrow, negative or stereotypical representations of different groups. Stereotyping on the basis of any of the protected characteristics as listed above must be avoided.

If a source does legitimately show a stereotypical view of a particular group, it is important that the associated question draws attention to this, or seeks comment on it.

For example, a history question may ask a candidate to:

*Discuss the positive impact that European values and lifestyles had on sub-Saharan countries during the British colonial period.*


This should be altered to ensure the assumption that British Colonialism had a positive impact is not being made.

*What effect did European values and lifestyles have during the British colonial period in sub-Saharan countries?*


## Gender

All questions, items, tasks and supporting marking instructions for assessments should ensure that males and females are equally represented, and that any situations or contexts used should be equally within the experience of male and female candidates.

The following question includes a context which could be seen as gender specific. Whilst recognising that a real-life context may help candidates to understand what is being asked, a more generic example would be more accessible to more candidates.

	<p><i>Mike is practising his penalty kicks. Last week, Mike scored 18 out of 30. This week, he scored 16 out of 25. Has his scoring rate improved? <b>Give a reason for your answer.</b></i></p>
---	--

Using hair straighteners in the following question could isolate some males and females who are not familiar with them. A context which would be familiar to all candidates should be used instead.

	<p><i>The diagram shows a hair straightener and its rating plate. (i) State the names of the wires in the flex of the hair straightener. (ii) State the colours of the insulation on the wires in this flex. You must indicate clearly which colour applies to each wire.</i></p>
---	---

It is important that females and males are shown as having equal status, as playing an equal and active role and as being equally competent in both intellectual and practical activities. Therefore, if people are described in terms of a role relationship (wife, father, mother, manager, teacher, etc), both sexes should be treated in a balanced way (eg females are not solely portrayed in passive, sensitive roles and males in more active roles).

A number of stereotypical views are included in the example below:

<p><i>Mrs Brady is a busy mum with four children at school. She runs a business from home ironing clothes and needs a new ironing board. She is going to expand her business by ironing table cloths and napkins for local restaurants. Her teenage daughter is going to help her in the evenings.  Study the information about ironing boards below.</i></p>
---



It would be less stereotypical if re-worded as:

*The Brady family runs a business from home ironing clothes. They are going to expand the business by ironing table cloths and napkins for local restaurants and need a new ironing board. The teenage children will be using it as well.*

*Study the information about ironing boards below.*

When referring to specific occupations they should be referred to in a gender-neutral way (eg, police officer rather than policeman; fire-fighter rather than fireman).

For example, in a question on customer service, candidates are asked to:

*Plan a rota for 8 part-time women workers manning a 24 hour telephone helpline.*

The same question can easily be written to avoid gender stereotypes:

*Plan a rota for 8 part-time workers to staff a 24 hour telephone helpline.*

And in:

*The local doctor may be lucky: he keeps much of his social status.*

The sexual bias can be avoided by the use of plural or alternative structures, to become:

*Local doctors are lucky. They keep much of their social status.*

A balanced approach to roles and activities should be adopted and the word order relating to gender throughout and assessment should be varied, ie, not always 'men and women', 'boys and girls' and 'he or she'.

## **Disability**


All questions, items, tasks and supporting marking instructions for assessments should ensure that disabled and non-disabled people are represented as having equal status.

Contexts used in an assessment should also be considered to ensure that no barriers for disabled candidates have been included.

For example, basing a question on the songs of a particular pop group may make it more interesting to some candidates, but could cause difficulties for deaf candidates.

Abstract language may be problematic to a range of candidates with poor reading skills including disabled candidates who have language impairments, are deaf or who have autistic spectrum conditions.

For example, the following question asks candidates to express their thoughts and feelings.

	<p><b>Write about</b> an occasion when <b>you</b> had a telephone call giving you <i>unwelcome news</i>. Remember to include your <b>thoughts and feelings</b>.</p>
---	---

Candidates who have an autistic spectrum condition may be unable to express themselves in this way, and therefore be unable to answer the question. If a question such as this is included in an assessment, an alternative option should be offered.

For guidance on the range of assessment arrangements often required by disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, consult the Assessment Arrangements web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html)

### **Race, religion or belief**

All questions, items, tasks and supporting marking instructions for assessments should avoid any ethnic or racial stereotyping.

It is also important that contexts used are within the experience of students from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and all people from diverse backgrounds should be portrayed in a realistic and positive way.

The question below makes the assumption that there is a general prejudice against Jewish people, and does not invite the candidate to challenge the reasons for anti-Semitism.

*Explain, briefly, why some people are prejudiced against Jews.*

The content of some Courses may legitimately deal with issues which could potentially present barriers to some candidates on grounds of religion and belief. It may not be possible to remove these aspects from the assessment, but care needs to be taken to ensure that such issues are dealt with in an objective and sensitive manner.

The aim of the assessment should be to allow candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding or apply the skills of analysis and evaluation of these issues.

Sub-question (c) in the example below makes the assumption that embryo research is widely acceptable to all candidates, and this may offend and present a barrier to candidates who, for religious or cultural reasons, believe otherwise.

#### **Question 4 — Medical ethics**

- (a) *What is religious morality based upon?*
- (b) *Describe Utilitarian ethics.*
- (c) *Describe **two** uses of embryos.*
- (d) *In what ways does UK law regulate the use of embryos?*
- (e) *Explain **two** religious concerns about the use of embryos.*

This example is more appropriate as sub-question (b) states a particular belief, and asks the candidate for comment.

- 3 (a) *Describe religious teaching on the status of the embryo.*  
(b) *'A religious person should never support interference with human embryos.'*

*How far do you agree?*

It should also be kept in mind that some practices which are accepted by some groups can offend others. For example, gambling 'odds', might seem to offer a real-life context for mathematical problems, but candidates with certain beliefs could find such references distasteful. Candidates from particular cultures may not be familiar with an apparently familiar term such as 'dice'.

Similar issues can arise with reference material which is included; as the use of some illustrations may cause offence to particular groups. Images of clothing and food items require particular sensitivity.

## 4 The role of the Principal Assessor in selecting items for a question paper

The Principal Assessor is responsible for monitoring the item bank and selecting items for specific question papers.

It is important for PAs to regularly monitor the item bank in order to have a clear overview of the number and type of items available in the bank and to establish, well in advance of a question paper being required, if a new cycle of item writing/checking activity is required.

**Before** selecting items for a question paper, PAs should consider the following:

- ◆ Are there enough items in the bank to select from?
- ◆ Have any of the items in the bank already been used?
- ◆ Items within a bank can be used more than once if appropriate. This tends to apply to short knowledge-based items rather than large, contextualised items or items based on specific sources.\*
- ◆ If there are items in the bank that have already been used, the PA should consider whether these items should be quarantined for a set period of time before reuse.

*If items that have previously been used **are** selected for a question paper, the PA must ensure that the total number of reused items in that question paper is kept within acceptable limits. For example, not too many items should be selected from the **same** past paper as this reduces the 'unseen nature' of the question paper and may advantage candidates.*

- ◆ Do the items available allow for appropriate sampling within each section of the question paper?
- ◆ Are there enough odd and even mark questions to meet the total marks allocated to specific sections (and the question paper as a whole)?
- ◆ What is the best order in which to select items?
- ◆ The logical approach to selecting items for a question paper may be to initially select items that have interdependencies or a possible duplication of content. Alternatively, it may be more helpful to select the items worth a large number of marks first.

**During** the process of selecting items for a question paper, it is advised that PAs use the Question Paper Reviewer Checklist (see Appendix C) and pay particular attention to validity, level, and the flow of the paper as detailed on the first page of the checklist.

*\*Although you may decide not to use an item again, it may be useful to ask Item Writers to consider adapting/re-contextualising existing items to create new items. This can be a particularly useful strategy as item banks become larger and more established.*

## **5 Question paper review**

### **Validity, accessibility and reliability**

At the question paper review stage the focus is on the overall validity, accessibility and reliability of the assessment. Validity and accessibility are concerned with what is assessed and with fair access; reliability is concerned with the consistency of assessments.

When carrying out the question paper review it is important to remember that each individual item has already gone through quality assurance checks in terms of validity, accessibility, reliability, appropriateness of marking instructions, inclusion of artwork and equality legislation.

### **Question paper review meeting**

Question Paper Reviewers are asked to prepare comments using the Question Paper Reviewer Checklist included in Appendix C.

At the meeting there will be discussion on the areas detailed on the checklist and agreement will be reached as to the content, layout and sampling of the final question paper. PAs will have access to the electronic item bank during the question paper review meeting should there be a requirement to replace any items in the question paper.

The PA will chair the question paper review meeting and confirm any changes required. These changes will be implemented electronically at the meeting and the question paper and marking instructions will be approved at the end of the meeting.

All attendees will be required to leave their papers with the QM/QO at the end of the meeting.

## **6 Question paper validation**

The Question Paper Validator (QPV) is responsible for carrying out a final independent check to confirm that the question paper, and any associated audio recording, is fit for purpose.

The QPV is the only subject specialist to view the question paper independently without seeing the marking instructions. By not knowing in advance how questions are intended to function, the QPV plays a valuable role in being able to see the question paper from the perspective of a candidate.

Where appropriate, the QPV should work through the question paper as a candidate would, answering questions in the space/booklet provided within the allocated time. This will further enhance the validity of the marking instructions by providing insight into possible candidate responses.

The QPV is required to complete a checklist (see Appendix D) to record their feedback and return this to the Assessment Development and Delivery – NQ Assessment team using the pre-addressed Royal Mail Special Delivery envelope provided.

The completed checklist will be sent to the PA/QM for consideration.

## 7 The role of the PA in creating general marking principles

Marking instructions consist of two sections:

- ◆ general marking principles
- ◆ marking instructions for each question

The Principal Assessor is responsible for producing and refining the general marking principles while individual Item Writers are responsible for producing the specific marking instructions for each question.

Note: Not all question papers will require marking instructions for each question.

### General marking principles

General marking principles are principles that Markers can apply when assessing responses which:

- ◆ are not explicitly covered in the specific marking instructions for a question
- ◆ are unconventional
- ◆ may cause uncertainty/debate

General marking principles should be:

- ◆ applicable to your question paper as a whole and/or a specific section of the paper
- ◆ appropriate for present and subsequent diets
- ◆ clear and precise

Before completing the general marking principles it can be helpful to think back to general questions or issues that have been raised by Markers in the past. It can also be helpful to review your marking instructions in conjunction with the question paper to identify any marking issues which you think might arise across the paper as a whole. Finally, it can be helpful for you to refer to the information on assessment and assessment objectives in the Course Specification.

Note: You will have the opportunity to add to these principles and to the marking instructions for each question, if appropriate, when you review live candidate scripts and finalise the marking instructions.

### Examples of some general marking principles

#### **Example 1:**

*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.*

**Example 2: Maths**

*Candidates may use any mathematically correct method to answer questions except in cases where a particular method is specified or excluded.*

*Where transcription errors occur, candidates would normally lose the opportunity to gain a processing mark.*

**Example 3: Physics**

*Mark should be awarded for non-standard symbols where the symbols are defined and the relationship is correct, or where the substitution shows that the relationship used is correct. This must be clear and unambiguous.*

*Rounding to an expected number of significant figures, the mark can be awarded for answers which have up to two figures more or one figure less than the number in the data with the fewest significant figures.*

**Example 4: Chemistry**

*Unless a numerical question specifically requires evidence of working to be shown, full marks should be awarded for a correct final answer (including units if required) on its own.*

*Ignore the omission of one H atom from a full structural formula provided the bond is shown.*

**Some additional considerations**

The general marking principles for the paper should be stated clearly and concisely. It will be useful to think of a new Marker when phrasing these principles. Try to avoid abbreviations or jargon unless anyone familiar with the subject, not just with the marking conventions for your team, would readily understand this.

Phrase the principles in a positive way and avoid any suggestion that ‘deducting marks’ or ‘imposing penalties’ is appropriate. For example, the principle that:

*Candidates should not be penalised for incorrect spelling of technical terms.*

could be rephrased positively as:

*Technical terms that have been spelled incorrectly should still be awarded the relevant mark.*

or

*The incorrect spelling of technical terms should be ignored and candidates should be awarded the relevant mark.*



## **8 The role of the PA in maintaining national standards**

### **Using qualitative information to enhance item writing and question paper production**

By the end of each examination diet the Principal Assessor will have gathered feedback from Markers, centres and candidates on how well items and question papers have functioned. It is the Principal Assessor's role to ensure that this information is used to inform future item writing.

### **Using statistical evidence to enhance item writing and question paper production**

At the end of each examination diet several sources of information become available on the overall performance of each question paper and the difficulty of individual questions within them. It is the Principal Assessor's role to ensure that this information is used to inform future item writing and the selection of specific items for question papers. The sources of statistical information available are detailed below.

#### **Grade boundaries**

The role of grade boundary setting is to ensure that standards are maintained over time. A change in grade boundaries may indicate that the level of difficulty of the associated question paper has changed. Grade boundary information is published annually on our website and is also incorporated into External Assessment Reports.

#### **Item-level analysis (selected subjects)**

Item-level analysis provides an in-depth view of both the difficulty and the discrimination of individual questions. This information can be used as a learning tool for Item Writers/Checkers. It is also useful in instances where the item could be reused in a future question paper. Principal Assessors and Qualifications Managers will be provided with item-level analysis reports (where applicable) prior to the grade boundary meeting.

#### **National ratings**

National ratings give an overall indication of the level of difficulty of the question paper in relation to other subjects at that level. It is useful to look at this data in relation to trends in the subject over the years and also across subjects that are closely associated within a curricular area.

Grade boundary information is available from SQA's website and other statistics can be requested from the Statistics team by e-mail at [sqa.statistics@sqa.org.uk](mailto:sqa.statistics@sqa.org.uk).

## 9 Key contacts

Activity	Contact	Telephone/e-mail
Using ContentProducer	CP Support	<a href="mailto:cpsupport@sqa.org.uk">cpsupport@sqa.org.uk</a> 0345 270 1213
Using ItemBank	NQ Assessment Item Banking	<a href="mailto:question.papers@sqa.org.uk">question.papers@sqa.org.uk</a> 0345 213 6805
House-styling of question papers	NQ Assessment QP Production	<a href="mailto:question.papers@sqa.org.uk">question.papers@sqa.org.uk</a> 0345 213 6854
Artwork and Shutterstock	NQ Assessment QP Production Graphic Artists	<a href="mailto:artwork.requests@sqa.org.uk">artwork.requests@sqa.org.uk</a> 0345 213 6819
Copyright	NQ Assessment QP Quality Assurance and Logistics	<a href="mailto:question.papers@sqa.org.uk">question.papers@sqa.org.uk</a> 0345 213 6891
Quality assurance of question papers and marking instructions	NQ Assessment Item Banking	<a href="mailto:question.papers@sqa.org.uk">question.papers@sqa.org.uk</a> 0345 213 6805
Audio recordings	NQ Assessment Item Banking	<a href="mailto:question.papers@sqa.org.uk">question.papers@sqa.org.uk</a> 0345 213 6805
Potential or actual breaches of question paper security	Fiona Marsden Operations Manager NQ Assessment	<a href="mailto:fiona.marsden@sqa.org.uk">fiona.marsden@sqa.org.uk</a> 0345 213 6793
Subject-specific queries	PA	
General advice and support	QM/QO	

## Appendix A: Item Writer and Checker Checklist

Content		Y/N
1	<i>Does the content of the item match the requirements set out in the item specification?</i>	
2	<i>Does the item focus on mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding (see Course Specification)?</i>	
<b>Difficulty</b>		
1	<i>Is the type of task appropriate to the level of the paper?</i>	
2	<i>Is the overall standard of the item comparable to items in the previous year's paper and to past items (and any other benchmarks)?</i>	
3	<i>Is the context/focus of the item useful/appropriate?</i>	
4	<i>Is the mark allocation appropriate to the demands of the question?</i>	
5	<i>Is it clear from the question how much detail is required?</i>	
6	<i>Is the context/case study useful and appropriate, and does it contain only relevant information?</i>	
7	<i>Is any source material/artwork useful and appropriate?</i>	
8	<i>Does the item avoid questions that depend on the candidate answering a previous question correctly?</i>	
9	<i>Do the question and marking instructions match? (If a question is open-ended then the marking instructions must allow for a range of valid answers.)</i>	
<b>Accessibility — language</b>		
1	<i>Is the language clear and unambiguous?</i>	
2	<i>Are sentences as short and simple as possible?</i>	
3	<i>Is information presented in the correct sequence?</i>	
4	<i>Are questions separated from information/statements?</i>	
5	<i>Is the meaning of command words clear?</i>	
6	<i>Do sentences follow the usual subject – verb – object order?</i>	
7	<i>Is subject-specific language familiar to candidates?</i>	
8	<i>Has difficult vocabulary, abstract and metaphorical language been avoided?</i>	
9	<i>Does the item avoid using the passive structure?</i>	
10	<i>Does the item avoid language, context, and resources that may cause an emotional response with some candidates?</i>	

<b>Accessibility — layout</b>		<b>Y/N</b>
1	<i>Are the rubrics unambiguous, visually clear and repeated where necessary?</i>	
2	<i>Has the correct question numbering and style been used?</i>	
3	<i>Do questions end in a question mark and tasks in a full stop?</i>	
4	<i>Are spelling, grammar and punctuation correct and consistent?</i>	
5	<i>Are there clear and sufficient signposts/reading cues?</i>	
6	<i>Has any form of advertising in the item been avoided?</i>	
7	<i>Is the layout/presentation of the item appropriate/attractive?</i>	
8	<i>If questions are in the style of a question/answer booklet, is the answer space appropriate for all types of correct response?</i>	
<b>Artwork</b>		
1	<i>Is artwork helpful/appropriate?</i>	
2	<i>Is artwork of a high quality and clearly presented?</i> <i>(Note: Artwork with a Shutterstock watermark is acceptable at this stage.)</i>	
3	<i>Is artwork placed appropriately in relation to the question with consistent space above and below?</i>	
4	<i>Are diagrams clearly labelled to show the question(s) to which they refer?</i>	
5	<i>Are graphs clearly labelled with units of measurement displayed on both axes?</i>	
6	<i>Do graphs have distinct background grid lines with all points of graph lines clearly readable?</i>	
<b>Marks</b>		
1	<i>Is a single mark allocated to each question or part of a question?</i>	
2	<i>Have half marks been avoided?</i>	
3	<i>Are marks correctly displayed (with no brackets or other annotations)?</i>	
<b>Marking instructions</b>		
1	<i>Does the item elicit the response expected in the marking instructions?</i>	
2	<i>Are marking instructions as clear and unambiguous as possible (explaining clearly what should and should not be given a mark)?</i>	
3	<i>Are marking instructions consistent with the command word(s) used in the item?</i>	
4	<i>Do the marking instructions avoid giving credit for skills which are <b>not</b> specified as a key objective, eg reading, writing and numeracy?</i>	

<b>Marking instructions contd</b>		Y/N
5	<i>Where responses may be awarded more than one mark, is it clear how many marks will be awarded for which parts or for which qualities?</i>	
6	<i>Do marking instructions follow the format of 'Expected Answers' and 'Additional Guidance'?</i>	
<b>Equality and inclusion</b>		
1	<i>Do your questions and/ or associated images avoid stereotyping on the basis of any of the following protected characteristics: age, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, race, disability and gender?</i>	
2	<i>Have you ensured that males and females are equally represented?</i>	
3	<i>Are the situations and contexts used equally within the experience of male and female candidates?</i>	
4	<i>Are females and males shown as having equal status, as playing an equal and active role and as being equally competent in both intellectual and practical activities?</i>	
5	<i>When people are described in terms of a role relationship (wife, father, mother, manager, teacher, etc), are both sexes treated in a balanced way, (ie females are not solely portrayed in passive, sensitive roles and males in more active roles)?</i>	
6	<i>Is the word order relating to gender varied, ie, not always 'men and women', 'boys and girls' and 'he or she'?</i>	
7	<i>Are occupations referred to in a gender-neutral way (eg, police officer rather than policeman; fire-fighter rather than fireman)?</i>	
8	<i>Do your questions avoid making unfair assumptions about disabled people?</i>	
9	<i>Are disabled and non-disabled people seen as having equal status?</i>	
10	<i>Are disabled people portrayed in a positive and active role?</i>	
11	<i>Where people are portrayed, do they reflect the diverse and changing nature of modern Scotland?</i>	
12	<i>Have ethnic stereotyping and/ or tokenism been avoided?</i>	
13	<i>Are people from diverse backgrounds seen to be participating in a realistic and positive way?</i>	
14	<i>Are the situations and contexts used within the experience of students from a variety of cultural backgrounds?</i>	
15	<i>Have you presented people's customs, culture and religion (wherever they come from) in a way that respects their value, meaning and role in life?</i>	

## Appendix B: Identification of Sources and Copyright-protected Material form

Identification of Sources and Copyright-Protected Material			
<p>A source, in this context, is any material which provides candidates with information required to answer a question or information which supplements a question. This includes pieces of <b>text</b> and <b>pictorial/graphical information</b> (photographs, drawings, graphs, diagrams etc).</p> <p><b>Important:</b> This form should be used to identify <b>all</b> sources in an item <b>other than Shutterstock</b>. You do not need to complete this form if you have sourced an image from Shutterstock as Shutterstock images are royalty free.</p> <p>Any source created by another person should be assumed to be protected by copyright. If a question contains source material that is copyright-protected, SQA is required by law to acknowledge this on the question paper and gain copyright clearance so the question paper can be published on our website after the exam diet.</p> <p><b>Important:</b> Before sourcing any material which may be copyright-protected, please explore all possible alternatives (as described in <i>Guidance for Producing and Quality Assuring Items, Question Papers and Marking Instructions</i> — Section 3.7).</p>			

Subject/Level/Item Number			
Subject		Level	
		Item Number	

Source Material Type – complete this section to identify the type of source material.		
Text <input type="checkbox"/>	Pictorial/Graphical <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Please give a brief description of your source material.		

Source Of Material – complete this section to identify where the source material is from.			
Did you create the entire source material yourself? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Internet</b>			
URL (Web Page Address)	http://		
Date you accessed the web page		Time you accessed the web page	
<b>Book</b>			
Title		Author	
ISBN		Page(s)	
<b>Newspaper</b>			
Title		Date	Page(s)

**Text** – complete this section for text source material.

Have you adapted the material?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – slightly <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – significantly <input type="checkbox"/>
What percentage of the overall source material you are using?			

**Pictorial/Graphical** – complete this section for pictorial/graphical source material.

SQA’s in-house Graphic Artists can recreate pictorial/graphical source material or find alternatives on Shutterstock.

Do you require the pictorial/graphical source material to be used as is, without modification?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
------------------------------	-----------------------------

If yes, please give a brief reason.

--

**Publisher Details** – complete this section with any publisher details.

Name

--

Address

--

E-mail Address

--

**Further Information** – complete this section with any further information relating to the source material.

--

## Appendix C: Question Paper Reviewer Checklist

<b>Validity — Course coverage</b>		<b>Y/N</b>
1	Does the question paper adhere to the structure and coverage criteria specified in the Course Assessment Specification and the Assessment Overview?	
2	Have questions/tasks been included which will generate the evidence of attainment required to measure against the Course grade descriptions?	
3	Where appropriate, are there sufficient opportunities to assess integration, breadth, challenge and application?	
4	Does the weight given to a particular part of the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding in the question paper reflect its relative importance in the Course Specification?	
5	Does the question paper avoid overlap with any other Course assessment method being used (suggesting over-assessment)?	
6	If general skills (such as literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing) are included in the Course Assessment Specification/Assessment Overview, are they being appropriately assessed in the question paper and are marks explicitly awarded for these skills?	
<b>Validity — Sampling</b>		
1	Is the sampling of the syllabus systematic but unpredictable (to avoid question 'spotting')?	
2	Does the question paper look like an 'unseen' paper (ie it does not resemble a specimen question paper or a past paper too closely)?	
3	Does the question paper focus on mandatory content (rather than marginal content)?	
<b>Validity — Other</b>		
1	Is the range of types of questions/tasks (eg which assess knowledge, understanding, interpretation, evaluation, analysis or synthesis) in accordance with the Course Assessment Specification/Assessment Overview?	
2	Is the question paper and marking instructions, where appropriate, consistent with practice in similar subjects and across Courses with similar aims and purposes?	
<b>Level</b>		
1	Is the level of difficulty of the overall paper comparable with previous years?	
2	Is the level of demand of the question paper consistent with the SCQF level descriptors?	
3	Where there is question choice, do the various options have the same level of difficulty?	
4	Is there the right amount of discriminating questions throughout the paper?	
5	Is the amount of writing required of the candidate appropriate to the skills, knowledge and understanding being assessed?	



<b>Accessibility</b>		<b>Y/N</b>
1	Using your professional judgement, can the question paper be completed by moderately prepared candidates in the allocated time?	
2	Does the paper flow in an appropriate way?	
3	Is the amount of reading in the question paper appropriate for the level?	
4	Are the questions sequenced by degree of difficulty (if appropriate)?	
5	Is there correct and consistent use of command words?	
6	Does the rubric of the sections make the purpose of the task clear?	
7	Are the questions and parts of questions numbered correctly and do they run in sequence?	
8	Are 'signposts' (headings, sub-headings, indentations, boxing of text, underlining, bold type, capitals, and italics) used appropriately and consistently?	
9	Is there enough space for answers to be written on the question paper (where appropriate)?	
10	Where a question runs to more than one page, is all the information required to answer the question, or each part of the question contained on facing pages (to avoid candidates having to turn over to access information)?	
11	Is the layout of the paper as attractive and as uncluttered as possible?	
12	Are sources (textual, pictorial or graphical) positioned and sized appropriately in relation to the question to which they refer?	
13	Are sources (textual, pictorial or graphical) referred to correctly and consistently between the source and the question to which they refer?	
<b>Marks check</b>		
1	Does the total number of marks available in the paper match the total specified in the Course Assessment Specification?	
2	Are marks allocated for each question or part of question based on the Course Assessment Specification/Assessment Overview?	
3	Is a single mark allocated to each question or part of a question?	
<b>Marking instructions</b>		
1	Are general marking instructions: helpful to Markers, appropriate for present and subsequent diets, phrased in a positive way to avoid any suggestion of 'deducting marks', clear and precise?	
<b>Equality and inclusion</b>		
1	Does the question paper and marking instructions comply with SQA guidelines on equality and inclusion? (See current guidance on equality and inclusion.)	

## Appendix D: Question Paper Validator Checklist

	(Y/N)	Comments
In your professional opinion, can the question paper be completed in the allocated time? Where appropriate, you should work through the question paper as a candidate, answering questions in the space/booklet provided and within the allocated time.		
Is the level of the question paper appropriate?		
Are questions in an appropriate sequence?		
Is there enough space for answers to be written on the question paper (if applicable)?		
Is the format/layout of the question paper appropriate?		
Is any optionality within the question paper made clear?		
Is text and artwork clearly presented?		
Are marks in the correct position and correctly tallied?		
Does the audio recording match the material printed on the question paper (if applicable)?		
Has stereotyping been avoided on the basis of the following protected characteristics: age, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, race, disability and gender?		
Does the question paper avoid the use of questions/tasks which are worded in a way that could cause: offence, an emotional response or confusion/ambiguity? Please advise on any areas where the readability could be improved.		
Are contexts within the question paper recognisable and accessible to all candidates?		
Any other comments on the question paper:		

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Bloom's Taxonomy 'Revised'

### Key words and types of questions

<b>Remember (knowledge) (shallow processing: drawing out factual answers, testing recall and recognition)</b>	
<b>Key words</b>	<b>Types of questions</b>
Choose	Who?
Describe	Where?
Define	Which one?
Identify	What?
Label	How?
List	What is the best one?
Locate	Why?
Match	How much?
Memorise	When?
Name	What does it mean?
Omit	
Recite	
Recognise	
Select	
State	

<b>Understand (comprehension) (translating, interpreting and extrapolating)</b>	
<b>Key words</b>	<b>Types of questions</b>
Classify	State in your own words.
Defend	Which are facts?
Demonstrate	What does this mean?
Distinguish	Is this the same as...?
Explain	Give an example.
Express	Select the best definition.
Extend	Condense this paragraph.
Give example	What would happen if...?
Illustrate	State in one word...
Indicate	Explain what is happening.
Interrelate	What part doesn't fit?
Interpret	Explain what is meant.
Infer	What expectations are there?
Judge	Read the graph (table).
Match	What are they saying?
Paraphrase	This represents...
Represent	What seems to be...?
Restate	Is it valid that...?
Rewrite	What seems likely?
Select	Show in a graph, table.
Show	Which statements support...?
Summarise	What restrictions would you add?
Tell	
Translate	

<b>Apply (knowing when to apply; why to apply; and recognising patterns of transfer to situations that are new, unfamiliar or have a new slant for students)</b>	
<b>Key words</b>	<b>Types of questions</b>
Apply	Predict what would happen if
Choose	Choose the best statements that apply
Dramatise	Judge the effects
Explain	What would result
Generalise	Tell what would happen
Judge	Tell how, when, where, why
Organise	Tell how much change there would be
Paint	Identify the results of
Prepare	
Produce	
Select	
Show	
Sketch	
Solve	
Use	

<b>Analyse (breaking down into parts, forms)</b>	
<b>Key words</b>	<b>Types of questions</b>
Analyse	What is the function of...?
Categorise	What's fact? Opinion?
Classify	What assumptions...?
Compare	What statement is relevant?
Differentiate	What motive is there?
Distinguish	Related to, extraneous to, not applicable.
Identify	What conclusion?
Infer	What does the author believe?
Point out	What does the author assume?
Select	Make a distinction
Subdivide	State the point of view of...
Survey	What is the premise?
	State the point of view of...
	What ideas apply?
	What ideas justify the conclusion?
	What's the relationship between?
	The least essential statements are
	What's the main idea? Theme?
	What inconsistencies, fallacies?
	What literary form is used?
	What persuasive technique?
	Implicit in the statement is...

<b>Evaluate (according to some set of criteria, and state why)</b>	
<b>Key words</b>	<b>Types of questions</b>
Appraise	What fallacies, consistencies, inconsistencies appear?
Judge	Which is more important, moral, better, logical, valid, appropriate?
Criticise	Find the errors
Defend	
Compare	

<b>CREATE (combining elements into a pattern not clearly there before)</b>	
<b>Key words</b>	<b>Types of questions</b>
Choose	How would you test...?
Combine	Propose an alternative.
Compose	Solve the following.
Construct	How else would you...?
Create	State a rule.
Design	
Develop	
Do	
Formulate	
Hypothesise	
Invent	
Make	
Make up	
Originate	
Organise	
Plan	
Produce	
Role play	
Tell	

## Appendix F: Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level descriptors

### SCQF level 4 (National 4)

The following descriptions are for guidance only. It is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

Knowledge and understanding	Practice: applied knowledge, skills and understanding	Generic cognitive skills	Communication, ICT and numeracy skills	Autonomy, accountability and working with others
<p>Demonstrate and/or work with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ basic knowledge</li> <li>◆ some simple facts and ideas in, about, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector</li> <li>◆ knowledge of basic processes, materials and terminology</li> </ul>	<p>Relate knowledge to personal and/or practical contexts.</p> <p>Use a few skills to complete straightforward tasks with some non-routine elements.</p> <p>Prepare for familiar and routine tasks.</p> <p>Select and use, with guidance, appropriate tools and materials safely and effectively.</p>	<p>Use, with guidance, given stages of a process to deal with a problem, situation or issue.</p> <p>Operate in straightforward contexts.</p> <p>Identify and/or take account of some of the consequences of action/inaction.</p>	<p>Use some routine skills, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Produce and respond to simple but detailed written and oral communication in familiar contexts.</li> <li>◆ Use the basic features of familiar ICT applications to process and obtain information.</li> <li>◆ Use basic numerical and graphical data in straightforward and familiar contexts.</li> </ul>	<p>Work alone or with others on tasks with regular, directive supervision.</p> <p>Contribute to the setting of goals, timelines, etc.</p> <p>Contribute to the review of completed work and offer suggestions for improving practices and processes.</p> <p>Identify own strengths and weaknesses relative to the work.</p>

## Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level descriptors

### SCQF level 5 (National 5)

The following descriptions are for guidance only. It is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

Knowledge and understanding	Practice: applied knowledge, skills and understanding	Generic cognitive skills	Communication, ICT and numeracy skills	Autonomy, accountability and working with others
<p><i>Demonstrate and/or work with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ basic knowledge</li> <li>◆ a range of simple facts, ideas and theories in, about, and associated with, a subject/ discipline/sector</li> <li>◆ knowledge and understanding of basic processes, materials and terminology</li> </ul>	<p><i>Relate knowledge and ideas to personal and/or practical contexts.</i></p> <p><i>Use a range of skills associated with the subject/discipline/sector to complete some routine and non-routine tasks.</i></p> <p><i>Plan and organise both familiar and unfamiliar tasks.</i></p> <p><i>Select appropriate tools and materials and use them safely and effectively.</i></p> <p><i>Adjust tools where necessary following safe practices.</i></p>	<p><i>Use a process to deal with a problem, situation or issue that is straightforward.</i></p> <p><i>Operate in a familiar context, but where there is a need to take account of or use additional information of different kinds, some of which will be theoretical or hypothetical.</i></p>	<p><i>Use a range of routine skills, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Produce and respond to detailed written and oral communication in familiar contexts.</li> <li>◆ Use standard ICT applications to process, obtain and combine information.</li> <li>◆ Use a range of numerical and graphical data in routine contexts that may have some non-routine elements.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Work alone or with others on tasks with minimum directive supervision.</i></p> <p><i>Agree goals and responsibilities for self and/or work team.</i></p> <p><i>Take lead responsibility for some tasks.</i></p> <p><i>Show an awareness of own and/or others' roles, responsibilities and requirements in carrying out work and contribute to the evaluation and improvement of practices and processes.</i></p>



## Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level descriptors

### SCQF level 6 (Higher)

The following descriptions are for guidance only. It is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

Knowledge and understanding	Practice: applied knowledge, skills and understanding	Generic cognitive skills	Communication, ICT and numeracy skills	Autonomy, accountability and working with others
<p><i>Demonstrate and/or work with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ an appreciation of the body of knowledge that constitutes a subject/discipline/sector</li> <li>◆ a range of knowledge, facts, theories, ideas, properties, materials, terminology, practices and techniques about, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector</li> </ul> <p><i>Relate the subject/discipline to a range of practical and/or commonplace applications.</i></p>	<p><i>Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ in known, practical contexts</li> <li>◆ in using some of the basic, routine practices, techniques and/or materials associated with the subject/ discipline/ sector</li> <li>◆ in exercising these in routine contexts that may have non-routine elements</li> <li>◆ in planning how skills will be used to address set situations and/or problems and adapt these as necessary</li> </ul>	<p><i>Obtain, organise and use factual, theoretical and/or hypothetical information in problem solving.</i></p> <p><i>Make generalisations and predictions.</i></p> <p><i>Draw conclusions and suggest solutions.</i></p>	<p><i>Use a wide range of skills, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Produce and respond to detailed and relatively complex written and oral communication in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts.</li> <li>◆ Select and use standard ICT applications to process, obtain and combine information.</li> <li>◆ Use a wide range of numerical and graphical data in routine contexts which may have non-routine elements.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Take responsibility for carrying out a range of activities where the overall goal is clear, under non-directive supervision.</i></p> <p><i>Exercise some supervisory responsibility for the work of others and lead established teams in the implementation of routine work within a defined and supervised structure.</i></p> <p><i>Manage limited resources within defined and supervised areas of work.</i></p> <p><i>Take account of roles and responsibilities related to the tasks being carried out and take a significant role in the evaluation of work and the improvement of practices and processes.</i></p>

## Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level descriptors

### SCQF level 7 (Advanced Higher)

The following descriptions are for guidance only. It is not expected that every point will necessarily be covered.

Knowledge and understanding	Practice: applied knowledge, skills and understanding	Generic cognitive skills	Communication, ICT and numeracy skills	Autonomy, accountability and working with others
<p><i>Demonstrate and/or work with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ an overall appreciation of the body of knowledge that constitutes a subject/ discipline/ sector</li> <li>◆ knowledge that is embedded in the main theories, concepts and principles of the subject/ discipline/ sector</li> <li>◆ an awareness of the dynamic nature of knowledge and understanding</li> </ul>	<p><i>Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ in practical contexts</li> <li>◆ in using some of the basic and routine professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/ discipline/ sector</li> </ul> <p><i>To practise these in both routine and non-routine contexts.</i></p>	<p><i>Present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas that are routine to a subject/ discipline/ sector.</i></p> <p><i>Use a range of approaches to address defined and/or routine problems and issues within familiar contexts.</i></p>	<p><i>Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced skills associated with a subject/ discipline/ sector, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Convey complex ideas in well-structured and coherent form.</li> <li>◆ Use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts.</li> <li>◆ Select and use standard ICT applications to process and obtain a variety of information and data.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/ discipline/ sector.</i></p> <p><i>Accept supervision in less familiar areas of work.</i></p> <p><i>Exercise some managerial or supervisory responsibility for the work of others within a defined and supervised structure.</i></p> <p><i>Manage limited resources within defined areas of work.</i></p> <p><i>Take the lead in implementing agreed plans in familiar or defined contexts.</i></p>

<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>	<b>Practice: applied knowledge, skills and understanding</b>	<b>Generic cognitive skills</b>	<b>Communication, ICT and numeracy skills</b>	<b>Autonomy, accountability and working with others</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ an understanding of the difference between explanations based on evidence and/or research and other sources, and of the importance of this difference</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Use a range of numerical and graphical skills in combination.</li> <li>◆ Use numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/targets.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Take account of own and others' roles and responsibilities when carrying out and evaluating tasks.</i></p> <p><i>Work, under guidance, with others to acquire an understanding of current professional practice.</i></p>

## Appendix G: Examples of the correct use of command words

The examples provided below are only a selection and are not the only way in which a phrase can be used well.

### ANALYSE

*Identify parts, the relationship between them, and their relationships with the whole. Draw out and relate implications. Analyse data (possibly including calculations as well as a conclusion).*

### English Higher, Close Reading 2012

#### Question

Show how the writer's use of language in lines 20–28 highlights the scale of the media operation at the Sydney Olympic Games.

In your answer you should refer to such features as sentence structure, word choice, imagery. Max 4 marks

#### Marking instruction (first part)

Marks will depend on the quality of comment. Insightful comment on one feature could be worth up to 3 marks. For full marks, there must be reference to more than one feature.

Reference alone: 0. Mere identification of an image or a feature of sentence structure: 0.

When dealing with imagery, answers should show recognition of the literal root of the image and then explore how the writer is extending it figuratively.

Candidates may well choose to deal with the points listed here under 'Imagery' as word choice.

Possible answers:

Sentence structure		
1	<i>minor/non-sentence 'That and the size of it.'</i>	<i>as if incapable of expanding on the description, suggests awe, amazement</i>
2	<i>parenthesis '– no exaggeration –'</i>	<i>to point out truthfulness, despite the apparently incredible quantity of equipment</i>
3	<i>list 'of desks, phones... paper'</i>	<i>emphasises the range and quantity of the equipment</i>
4	<i>repetition of 'endless'</i>	<i>emphasises the idea of limitless quantities</i>
5	<i>series of three sentences beginning</i>	<i>emphasises the seemingly never-ending</i>

	<i>with 'And'</i>	<i>number of places</i>
6	<i>use of summative direct speech</i>	<i>conveys awestruck reaction to witnessing the large size of the operation</i>

<b>Word choice</b>		
7	<i>'aircraft hangar'</i>	<i>suggests a huge, cavernous, industrial-type enclosed space</i>
8	<i>'thousands'</i>	<i>use of a large, indeterminate number to stress the vastness of the coverage</i>
9	<i>'endless yards'</i>	<i>exaggeration, use of vague, indeterminate length to suggest something going on as far as the eye can see</i>
10	<i>'mysterious places'</i>	<i>suggestion that there are not only the visible, explicable areas but, in addition, another category of rather mystifying parts ...</i>
11	<i>'something like 10,000'</i>	<i>vagueness to suggest difficulty of being precise about such huge numbers</i>
12	<i>'muttered'</i>	<i>(perhaps) suggests colleague is awestruck, incapable of normal speech</i>

<b>Imagery</b>		
13	<i>'(made his) landfall'</i>	<i>just as an explorer finds the sighting of land a source of plenty after the deprivations of a life at sea, so the journalist's arrival in the press centre gave him immediate access to a range of media possibilities</i>
14	<i>'domain'</i>	<i>just as a lord has control over a large estate, so the photographers rule over their extensive part of the Olympic Games coverage; connotations from IT – 'domain name' – could also be explored</i>

**CALCULATE**

*Determine a number from given facts, figures, or information.*

**Accounting, Intermediate 2, 2012**

*Question*

Jay Jazeera has just bought the Inverewe Country Hotel. The following information is available.

- 1 The hotel has 20 double rooms and is open 50 weeks of the year, providing bed and breakfast only to guests.
- 2 The occupancy rate is 90%.
- 3 Laundry costs are £500 per month.
- 4 Wages: 2 Receptionists at £21,000 each per year.
- 2 Waiting Staff at £190 each week the hotel is open.
- 2 Cleaners at £120 each week the hotel is open.
- 5 Breakfast costs are £5 per person.
- 6 Maintenance costs during the year are estimated at £32,384.

(a) Calculate:

(i) the total number of room nights sold per year; 4

(ii) the total number of guest nights per year, assuming there are always 2 guests per room. 1

*Marking instruction*

(i) Total number of room nights sold per year

$$\begin{array}{rcccccc}
 20 \text{ rooms} & & \times & 50 \text{ weeks} & \times & 7 \text{ days} & = 7,000 \times 90\% \\
 1 & & & 1 & & 1 & 1 \\
 & & & & & & = 6,300 & (4)
 \end{array}$$

(ii) Number of guests

$$\begin{array}{r}
 6,300 \times 2 \\
 = 12,600 & (1)
 \end{array}$$



**COMPARE**

*Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the similarities and/or differences between for instance things, methods, or choices.*

**History National 5 Specimen Question Paper**

Question

**Sources A** and **B** describe what happened to Jewish communities during the First Crusade.

**Source A**

*After only a few weeks of travelling, Peter the Hermit and his followers came upon a Jewish community in Germany. Many of the Crusaders were poor and hungry so they began stealing food and possessions from the Jews. As the Crusaders thought the Jews were the enemy of Christ, most believed they could treat them as they wished. Some forced the Jews to change religion and become Christian. Others, against the orders of Peter the Hermit, slaughtered the Jews.*

**Source B**

*A rumour spread among the Crusaders that whoever killed a Jew would have all their sins forgiven. Immediately Peter the Hermit's army began attacking and killing Jewish men, women and children. Although some Jews tried to fight back they had few weapons and were easily defeated. In the riot that followed, houses were robbed and valuables stolen. Those Jews who survived the massacre were forced to give up their faith and become Christians.*

1. Compare the views of **Sources A** and **B** about what happened to Jews during the First Crusade. (Compare the sources overall and/or in detail.) 4 marks

Marking instruction

		General marking instructions	Specific marking instructions
<b>Q1</b>	<b>Max 4</b>	<p><i>Candidates must interpret evidence and make direct comparisons between sources. Candidates are expected to compare content directly on a point-by point basis. They may compare the details in the sources and/or compare the viewpoints overall.</i></p> <p><i>Up to the total mark allocation for this question:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 mark should be given for each simple point of</li> </ul>	<p><i>Candidates can be credited in a number of ways up to a maximum of 4 marks.</i></p> <p><i>Candidates must make direct comparisons of the two sources, either overall or in detail. A simple comparison will indicate what points of detail or overall viewpoint they agree or disagree about and should be given 1 mark. A developed comparison of the points of detail or overall viewpoint should be given 2 marks. Candidates may achieve full marks by making four simple comparisons, two developed comparisons or by a combination of these.</i></p>



		<p><i>comparison</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>a second mark should be given to each developed point of comparison</i></li></ul> <p><i>Candidates may achieve full marks by making four simple comparisons, two developed comparisons, or by a combination of these.</i></p>	
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## **Business Management, Intermediate 2, 2012**

### *Question*

5. When setting a price for a new game, Realtime Worlds could use a variety of methods. Compare 2 pricing methods an organisation could use. 2

### *Marking instruction*

#### **Destroyer pricing and price skimming**

- ◆ Destroyer pricing initially set very low whereas price skimming set the price initially very high.
- ◆ Destroyer pricing is used to eliminate competitors from the market whereas price skimming is used in a market where there is very little competition.
- ◆ Prices will rise once competition is eliminated with destroyer pricing whereas in price skimming the price is lowered once competitors enter the market.

#### **Penetration pricing and price skimming**

- ◆ Penetration pricing initially set the price low whereas price skimming set the price initially very high.
- ◆ Penetration pricing is used when trying to enter a very competitive market whereas price skimming is used in a market where there is very little competition.
- ◆ In penetration pricing prices will rise once brand loyalty has been established whereas in price skimming the price is lowered once competitors enter the market.

#### **Cost-plus pricing and competitive pricing**

- ◆ Cost-plus pricing is the most commonly used method of pricing whereas competitive pricing is used by industries who wish to keep prices the same rather than start price wars.
- ◆ Cost-plus pricing adds up the cost of making a product and then adds on a percentage for profit whereas in competitive pricing prices are set in line with competitors.

#### **Penetration pricing and destroyer pricing**

- ◆ Penetration pricing initially sets the price low whereas destroyer pricing sets the price initially very low/artificially low.
- ◆ Penetration pricing is used when trying to enter a very competitive market whereas destroyer pricing is used to eliminate competition.
- ◆ Both pricing methods raise their prices once they have achieved their aim.

**1 mark per compared point — both sides needed to get one mark**

**Accept any combination of methods**

### *Comment*

The above marking instruction seems to suggest that both sides need to be described as systematically as in the marking instruction to bring out the comparison.

## **Biology, Intermediate 1, 2010**

### *Question*

Different areas of the country have different types of soil. Some areas have clay soil which is heavy to dig, is made of small particles and has a high mineral content. It drains poorly and can easily become waterlogged and it has low air content.

Other areas have sandy soil which has large particles and a low mineral content. It is light to dig, has high air content and drains freely. Loam soil is also found in some areas. Loam has medium-sized particles, is easy to dig, is rich in organic matter and minerals and has good air content. It doesn't drain too quickly, or become waterlogged.

Use information **in the passage** to answer the following questions.

3. (a) (iii) Compare the mineral content of clay soil with that of sandy soil. 1

### *Marking instruction*

Clay soil has high (mineral content) **and** sandy soil has low (mineral content).

OR

Clay has a higher (mineral content).

OR

Sandy has a lower (mineral content).

Reference to the mineral content of the types of soil is acceptable as long as both soil types are named. If only one type is named, then a comparative statement must be made (ie clay has a high**ER** content). Any reference to small/large or air content is incorrect but does not negate an otherwise correct answer.

**CONCLUDE**

*Draw conclusions based on a text, scenario or set of information or data.*

Questions which ask candidates to 'conclude' will most likely be phrased using the word 'conclusion'.

**Applied Mathematics: Statistics, Advanced Higher, 2011**

*Question*

In London, on 1095 days between April 2004 and March 2007, the observed number of homicides per day are given in the table. Also given are some expected frequencies for a fitted Poisson distribution.

<i>Homicides</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5 or more</i>
<i>Observed</i>	713	299	66	16	1	0
<i>Expected</i>	705.2	2		68.3	10.0	1.1

- (b) In analysing the data, a statistician computed a chi-squared goodness-of-fit test statistic to be 3.58 with 2 degrees of freedom. Outline the steps she would have taken in order to obtain these values and state, with justification, what may be concluded concerning the fit of the Poisson distribution. 4

*Marking instruction*

- (b) She must have used frequency categories  
 0, 1, 2 and **3 or more** so that no expected frequency was less than 5. Degrees of freedom would then be calculated as 4 - No. of parameters estimated - 1 = 2. 1

The critical value of chi-squared for significance level 5% is 5.991. Since 3.58 is less than this value there is no evidence against the data fitting a Poisson distribution. 1

**Biology, Intermediate 1, 2010**

*Question*

7. (a) (iv) What valid conclusion can be drawn about the effectiveness of **biological** detergents from this investigation? 1

*Marking instruction*

Any valid conclusion from these results eg:  
 Bio works better than non-bio on cotton at 30 °C.  
 OR  
 Bios work better at 40 °C than at 30 °C.  
 OR  
 Bios work best at 40 °C.  
 Re-statement of results is not acceptable.  
 Any valid conclusion must make reference to temperature.

**CONSTRUCT**

*Make, build, put together an item or arguments.*

In question papers, this word is most like to be used as in the next examples.

**Mathematics, Intermediate 2, 2010**

*Question*

2. The pupils in a primary class record their shoe sizes as shown below:

8 7 6 5 6  
5 7 11 7 7  
7 8 7 9 6  
8 6 5 9

- (a) Construct a frequency table from the above data and add a cumulative frequency column.

2

*Marking instruction*

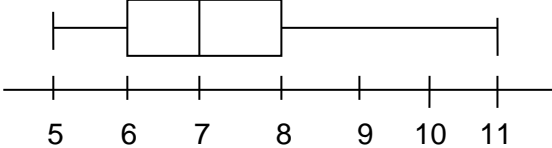
Question no.	Marking scheme Give 1 mark for each •	Illustrations of evidence for awarding a mark at each •		
2. (a)	<i>Answer:</i>			
	<i>Shoe size</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Cumulative frequency</i>
	5		3	3
	6		4	7
	7		7	14
	8		3	17
	9		2	19
	10		0	19
	11		1	20
<p>•<sup>1</sup> <i>communicate: table with frequency column (must include 10 in 'shoe size')</i></p> <p>•<sup>2</sup> <i>communicate: table with cumulative marks</i></p>				

•<sup>1</sup> 3, 4, 7, 3, 2, 0, 1 or correct tally

•<sup>2</sup> 3, 7, 14, 17, 19, 19, 20

2 marks

(b) Construct a boxplot for this data.

Question no.	Marking scheme Give 1 mark for each •	Illustrations of evidence for awarding a mark at each •
(b)	 <p>•<sup>1</sup> communicate: correct end points •<sup>2</sup> communicate: correct box</p>	<p>•<sup>1</sup> end points at 5 and 11 •<sup>2</sup> box showing Q1, Q2, Q3</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>2 marks</b></p>
<p><b>NOTES:</b></p> <p>1. Where the 5 figure summary is written on the boxplot, the diagram must be drawn to a reasonable scale.</p>		

**Mathematics, Intermediate 2, 2009**

*Question*

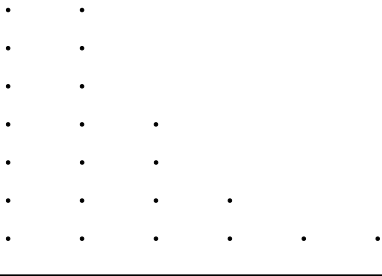
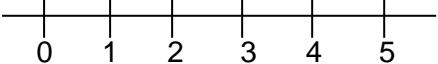
1. The number of goals scored one weekend by each team in the Football League is shown below.

0 1 1 2 1 0 0 5 0 1 3  
0 2 2 1 1 3 0 0 2 4 1

(a) Construct a dotplot for the data.

2

*Marking instruction*

Question no.	Marking scheme Give 1 mark for each •	Illustrations of evidence for awarding a mark at each •
1. (a)	 <p>•   • •   • •   •   • •   •   • •   •   •   • •   •   •   •   •   •</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p>0   1   2   3   4   5</p> <p>•<sup>1</sup> process: start to draw dotplot •<sup>2</sup> process: complete dotplot</p>	<p>•<sup>1</sup> evidence (see note 1) •<sup>2</sup> complete dotplot</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>2 marks</b></p>
<p><b>NOTES:</b></p> <p>1. Minimum acceptable evidence for the award of the first mark</p> 		

## DESCRIBE

*Provide a statement or structure of characteristics and/or features. More than an outline or than a list. May refer to for instance a concept, process, experiment, situation, or facts.*

### Geography Intermediate 2, 2012

#### Question

(c) Study the River Tawe between grid references 847167 (Tawe Bridge) and 810125.

Describe the physical features of the river **and** its valley.

4 marks

#### Marking instruction

**1 mark for each correct answer**

Answers may include:

River flows south (1); changes direction to flow west/southwest (1); river in its middle course (1); a number of tributaries join from both sides (1); meandering river (1); waterfall (1) at 843133 (1); river less than 10 metres wide (1). Wide valley floor (1); steep valley sides (1); u-shaped valley (1).

For full marks, both river and valley must be mentioned.

Max 1 mark for correct grid reference.

4 marks

### Sociology, Intermediate 2, 2012

#### Question

A1. Describe **two differences** between common sense and sociological explanations of human social behaviour.

#### Marking instruction

A total of **4 marks** may be awarded for this question, up to **2 marks** for each difference described.

For full marks, candidates should explain the differences using the correct sociological terminology.

Differences between common sense explanations and sociological explanations of human social behaviour could include:

- ◆ common sense explanations are based on opinion whereas sociological explanations are based on theories which have been tested through research
- ◆ common sense explanations are subjective whereas sociological explanations are objective
- ◆ common sense explanations carry notions of being factual or hard headed whereas sociological explanations challenge taken for granted 'facts' and assumptions.

**DETERMINE**

*Determine a number from given facts, figures, or information.*

It should be noted that ‘determine’ is a very technical term. Its meaning should have been made clear to candidates. Depending on the context, more common phrases such as ‘calculate’ might be preferable, and it should be clear when a result only (without the operation) is acceptable.

**Technological Studies Intermediate 2, 2012**

*Question*

4. Figure Q4 shows an electronic circuit for a garden night light.

*Marks*

DO NOT  
WRITE IN  
THIS  
MARGIN

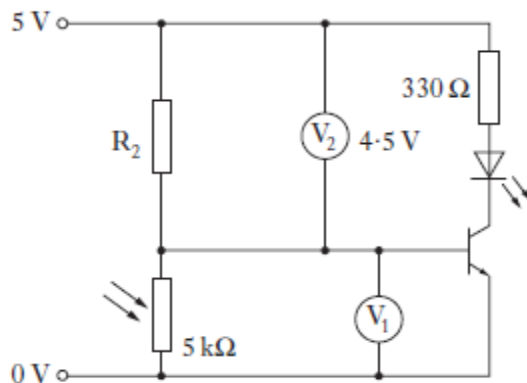


Figure Q4

(a) State, with reference to the Data Booklet, the light level that will produce a resistance of 5 kΩ in the LDR.

\_\_\_\_\_

1

(b) For the conditions shown in Figure Q4:

(i) determine the voltage shown on  $V_1$ ;

*Marking instruction*

(b) (i)  $5 - 4.5 = 0.5 \text{ V}$

1 mark



## **DISCUSS**

*Communicate ideas and information on a subject (in writing or orally). It may be possible to debate the two sides of the statement.*

It should be noted that the use of 'discuss' as a command word has a very specific definition in assessment, which is not the same as that used in everyday language. Its meaning should have been made clear to candidates.

### **Modern Studies Higher 2012 Section A**

#### *Question*

- A1 In carrying out its functions, local government in Scotland has come into conflict with the Scottish Government.  
Discuss.

#### *Marking instruction*

**'Pass' and better answers should feature developed, exemplified knowledge and understanding of:**

The roles and functions of local government in Scotland.  
Conflict (and co-operation) between local government and the Scottish Government.

#### **And**

Balanced comment/analysis of the view that in carrying out its functions local government has come into conflict with the Scottish Government.

#### **Answers may refer to:**

- ◆ Provides opportunity for people to take part in local decision making which in theory makes for better governance.
- ◆ Mandatory, discretionary and permissive functions of local government. Local authorities also play a regulatory role, eg granting licences and an advocacy role in promoting the interests of local communities.
- ◆ Thirty-two unitary authorities (29 mainland and 3 island councils).
- ◆ Collaboration between local government and voluntary sector in delivering services.
- ◆ Scottish Parliament is law-making body for devolved issues. It can pass laws setting out the powers and duties of local authorities.
- ◆ Councils receive around 80% of funding from Scottish Government (Aggregate External Finance which includes non-domestic rates). Most other finance comes from council tax, rents and charges for services.
- ◆ STV electoral system means Scottish councils are often run by a coalition which includes representatives from the same party as the Scottish Government. Local government offers a pathway to the Scottish Parliament. SNP has largest number of councillors (263) and formed Scottish Government for first time in 2007.

- ◆ 'Concordat' (Single Outcome Agreements) between Scottish Government and local authorities from 2007–11. Councils given increased budgets and less ring-fencing in return for council tax freeze.
- ◆ Demands for end to council tax rise freeze. Threat of cut to local authority budgets if CT freeze not maintained.
- ◆ PFI/Scottish Futures Trust. Opposed in principle and in practice by many councillors.
- ◆ Recommendations of Independent Budget Review (Beveridge) of public spending in Scotland. Reduction in Scotland's budget by as much as £42bn over 16 years. Recommendations included a fall in public sector employment by as many as 60,000 by 2014–15 and public sector pay freezes. Glasgow Council claim cuts in grants will 'kill the city'.
- ◆ Ongoing speculation with regard to reducing number of councils or the centralisation of delivery of some council services, eg education, fire service.

**EXPLAIN**

*Relate cause and effect and/or make relationships between things clear.*

**Intermediate 2 Business Management, 2012, Section 2**

*Question*

5. (c) (ii) Explain the advantages to an organisation of delayering. 4

*Marking instruction*

- ◆ Faster communication due to fewer layers for the information to go through.
- ◆ Quicker decision-making due to fewer managers to consult.
- ◆ Fewer management levels which will save costs on salaries.
- ◆ Organisation can respond quicker to change due to faster communication and decision-making.
- ◆ Managers have more subordinates to delegate work to which will prepare subordinates for promotion.

1 mark per explained advantage (4)

**Higher Geography, 2011**

*Question*

- (a) **Explain** fully what is meant by the term climax vegetation.

*Marking instruction*

**Assess out of 5 marks with a maximum of 1 mark for an example of climax vegetation.**

Climax vegetation is the final stage in the development of the natural vegetation of a locality or region when the composition of the plant community is relatively stable and in equilibrium with the existing environmental conditions. This is normally determined by climate or soil. These are self-sustaining ecosystems.

Candidates should be credited for being able to demonstrate knowledge of the evolution of plant life from early colonisation by pioneer species then, by succession, to the ultimate vegetation climax. Appropriate examples could also be given credit eg oak-ash forest in a cool temperature climate such as exists over much of Britain or Scots pine-birch forest in colder, wetter and less fertile Highland environments.

## Intermediate 2 RMPS, 2010

### Question

1. (c) Explain how a Buddhist might overcome the lower passions. Give reasons for your answer. 6 AE

### Marking instruction:

- ◆ Through meditation a Buddhist will resist the attachments that will lead to the lower passions.
- ◆ Meditation helps the Buddhist control the ‘inner chatter’ of the mind and allows him/her to resist Mara.
- ◆ Through reading the Buddhist scriptures a Buddhist is given advice on how to overcome attachments and desires.
- ◆ From a story like that of Kisagotami a Buddhist will learn the futility of personal or familial attachments.
- ◆ By becoming a member of the Sangha — through this they live in an environment where discipline and religious routine leave little time for distractions.
- ◆ Some Buddhists believe in the transference of merit — by praying to or meditating with a Bodhisattva or a Lama a Buddhist can gain merit from their good actions (Mahayana Buddhism).
- ◆ Following the Eightfold Path.
- ◆ Keeping the Precepts.

## Higher English, 2012, Close Reading

### Question

3. Referring to lines 13–19, explain the writer’s “revelation” (line 13). **2**

### Marking instruction

There must be some attempt to use own words. Blatant lifts: 0.

Both of the following for 2 marks.

Point 1 only: 1 mark.

Point 2 only: 0 marks.

- 1 a key moment in the lives of sportspeople/the culmination of years of preparation could be seen...
- 2 ...wherever he went/happening at the same time/in a large number of places/as part of the same overall event.

**EXPLORE**

*Carry out a detailed examination or enquiry, or follow a process in order to find out something.*

It should be noted that the use of 'explore' as a command word has a very specific definition in assessment, which is not the same as that which be used in everyday language. Its meaning should have been made clear to candidates.

**2010, Business Management, Advanced Higher**

*Question*

3. With reference to Exhibit 4 in particular, explore how the performance of Aggreko changed between 2005 and 2009.

**8**

*Marking instruction*

Award 1 mark for each relevant point plus 1 mark for each relevant development point. Maximum 4 marks per main point so that, to gain full marks, candidates should give a fully developed explanation of 2 separate main points. Max 2 marks for examples of changes in figures under each heading; nature of change must be specified, eg increase or decrease. 'Explore' requires candidates to explain in detail. Award a maximum of 4 marks for general points about performance and measures of it which are not related to the case study. Candidates are directed towards Exhibit 4 and would be expected to concentrate on this. However, credit should be given for valid points taken from other parts of the case study.

**EVALUATE**

*Make a judgement based on criteria. Determine the value of something*

**Mathematics, Standard Grade Credit, 2012**

The following question exemplifies the second part of the definition of ‘evaluate’ – Determine the value of something

*Question*

1 Evaluate

$$7.2 - 0.161 \times 30.$$

**2**

*Marking instruction*

No.	Give 1 mark for each •	Illustrations of evidence for awarding each mark
1	Ans: 2.37  • knowing correct order of operations • carrying out both calculations	• 4.83 • 2.37 2KU
<p><b>NOTES:</b></p> <p><i>(i) for 2.37 with or without working award 2/2</i></p> <p><i>(ii) for 4.83 with or without working award 1/2</i></p> <p><i>(iii) for 211.17 with or without working <math>(7.2 - 0.161) \times 30</math> award 1/2</i></p>		

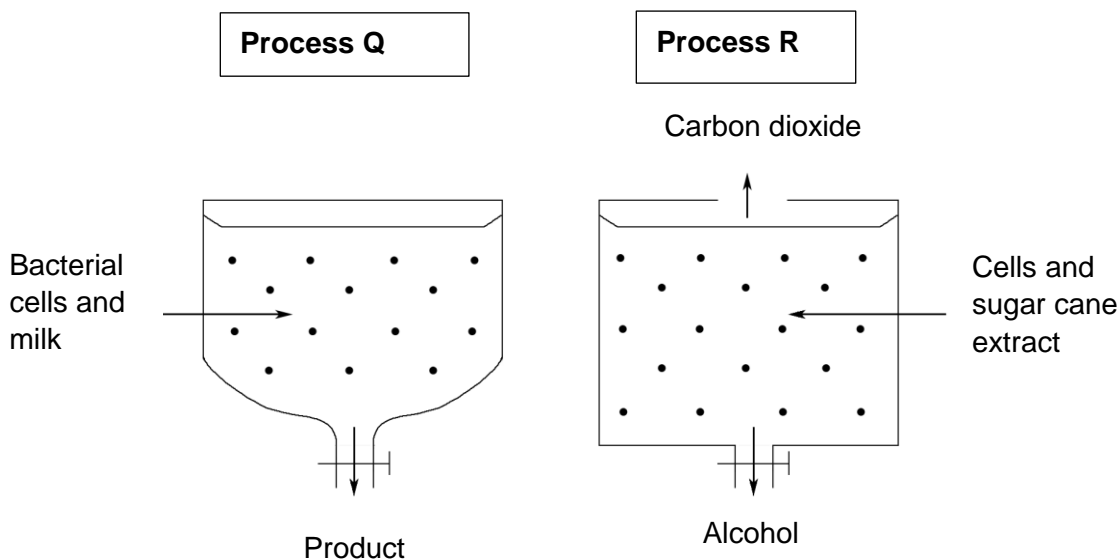
**NAME**

*Present in brief form/name.*

*Alternatives can be 'identify', 'list', 'state', 'give'. Please make clear when these are asking for a different response. Do not use them sometimes for different purposes and at other times as equivalent.*

**Biology Intermediate 2, 2012, Section B**

*Question*



1 (a) (ii) The milk curdles and a product is made in Process Q.  
Name this product.

1 Mark

*Marking instruction*

Question	Acceptable Answer	Mark	Unacceptable Answer
(ii)	yoghurt/cheese/fermented milk drink	1	brand names, curds

**Biology Intermediate 2, 2012, Section B**

*Question*

5 (b) Name one requirement, other than water, for which plants may be in competition.

1 Mark

*Marking instruction*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Acceptable answer</b>	<b>Mark</b>	<b>Unacceptable answer</b>	<b>Negates</b>
<i>(b)</i>	<i>light/nutrients/space (any other correct) Any one</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>carbon dioxide</i>	<i>food</i>



**OUTLINE**

*Provide a brief sketch of content. More than naming, but not a detailed description.*

**Business Management Intermediate 2, 2012, SECTION 2**

*Question*

1 (e) (ii) Outline the advantages of outsourcing for an organisation. 2 Marks

*Marking instruction*

(ii)

- ◆ Organisation can concentrate on core activity.
- ◆ Organisation does not have the expense of buying the specialist equipment.
- ◆ Organisation does not need to train the staff in this area.
- ◆ Specialists do the work.

1 mark per advantage (2)

*Question*

4 (b) Outline one advantage of electronic filing over manual filing. 1

*Marking instruction*

Outline **one** advantage of electronic filing over manual filing.

Electronic filing can be sorted (in different ways) quickly at the click of a button

Electronic files can be stored without taking physical space in the office

More than one person can access the file at a time

Electronic files can be protected by a password

Possible to search for an electronic file using a key word or phrase

Manually going through the files can be very time consuming

Electronic files can be backed up

DO NOT ACCEPT quicker or easier on its own.

*One mark per point*

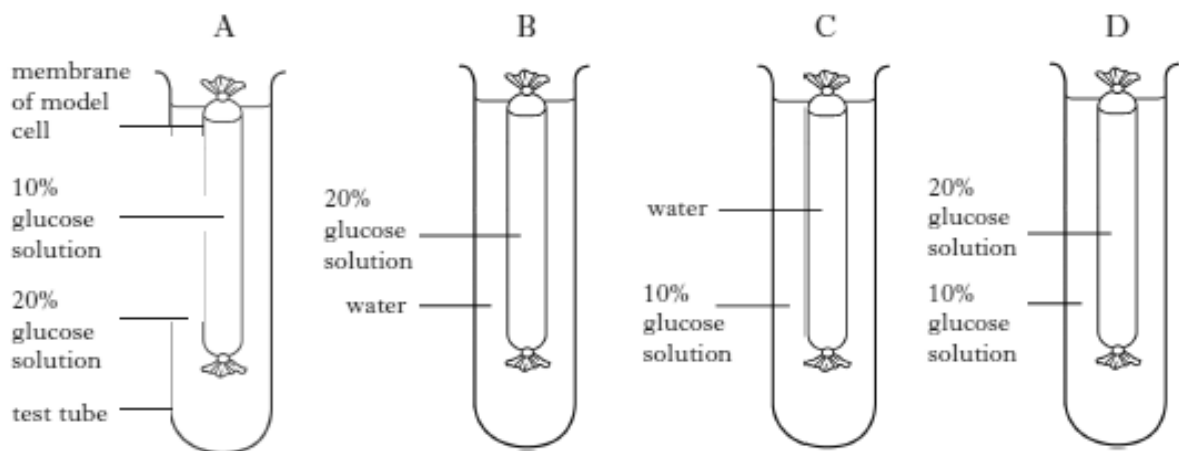
**PREDICT**

*Suggest what may happen based on available information.*

**Biology Intermediate 2, 2012, Section B**

*Question*

4. The following diagrams show an investigation into osmosis using four model cells. The model cells were weighed before placing them in the test tubes. After one hour the model cells were taken out of the test tubes and reweighed.



- 4 (d) Predict which model cell would have the greatest change in mass after one hour. Give a reason for your choice.

Model cell ----- 1

Reason -----

----- 1

*Marking instruction*

Question	Acceptable answer	Mark	Unacceptable answer
(d)	<i>B has the greatest difference in concentration/ concentration gradient</i>	<i>1 1</i>	<i>only restating concentrations from the diagram greatest difference in glucose concentration greatest difference in percentage greatest difference in concentration of solution</i>