



SQA's Guide to Using Capital Letters

Over the years, the use of capital letters has decreased in all forms of writing and the growth of the internet has emphasised this trend even more. We've taken this into account when preparing this guidance.

SQA's rule for when to use capitals, and when not, is:

- ◆ if it is the title of a specific person or thing, it takes title case
- ◆ if it's a more general name, it doesn't

Title case means initial capitals on main words only — like the heading to this guidance; **sentence case** means an initial cap on the first word; and **lower case** means no capitals at all. Most of the time, we will use lower case.

As well as words that take capitals in everyday English (such as the names of people and places), things that always need capitals when we're writing for the SQA are:

- ◆ names of qualifications
- ◆ unit and course titles
- ◆ the name of the subject of an SQA qualification we're discussing; and
- ◆ publication titles (but not types of publication)

Note: There is no need to retrospectively change existing documents or web pages.

Detailed guidance and examples

We always capitalise the names of qualifications.

Examples:

- ◆ Core Skills
- ◆ National Qualifications
- ◆ National Progression Awards
- ◆ National Certificates
- ◆ National 1, National 2, National 3, National 4 and National 5

- ◆ Higher
- ◆ Advanced Higher
- ◆ Higher National Unit
- ◆ Higher National Diploma
- ◆ Higher National Certificate
- ◆ Higher National Qualifications
- ◆ Scottish Vocational Qualifications
- ◆ Scottish Group Award
- ◆ Skills for Work
- ◆ Safe Road User Award
- ◆ Professional Development Awards
- ◆ Customised Awards

The titles of frameworks or programmes of work are set in title case.

Examples:

- ◆ Curriculum for Excellence
- ◆ Developing the Young Workforce
- ◆ Skills for Learning, Life and Work
- ◆ Understanding Standards

The names of SQA directorates and teams are capitalised.

Examples:

- ◆ Corporate Services Directorate
- ◆ Qualifications Directorate
- ◆ People and Services Team
- ◆ Human Resources and Organisation Development Team
- ◆ Customer Support Team
- ◆ Executive Management Team
- ◆ Qualifications Design Team

Unit and course titles are set in title case.

From now on we will only capitalise 'Course' and 'Unit' if they are part of a document title, but not when using 'unit' or 'course' in subsequent discussion.

Full titles and shortened titles of qualifications (eg N5 Biology)

Example

As stated in the **National 5 Biology: Multicellular Organisms Unit Specification**, the aims of the **unit** are to enable learners to...

No initial cap needed

Always capitalise the name of a subject area of a qualification. Don't use capitals when referring to a subject area beyond the SQA qualification.

Examples

Initial cap when referring to an SQA qualification

SQA's qualifications in **Biology** develop an understanding of applications of **biology**.

This is referring to SQA Biology courses, so takes an initial cap

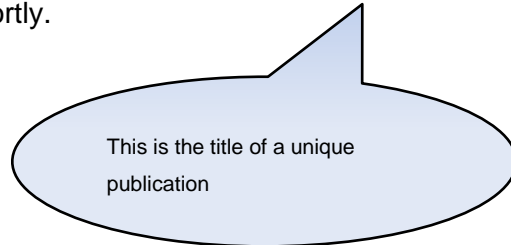
Lower case when referring to the subject in general

This new guidance is for teachers of Biology.

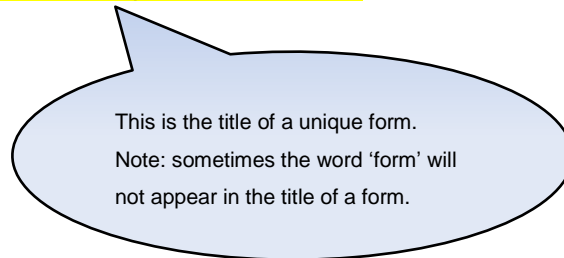
Titles of publications, documents and forms are set in title case, but use lower case in text when every subject has a document with an identical title.

Examples

The **Estimates, Absentees and Assessment Appeals Toolkit** is being updated and will be available again shortly.



Any scripts that are selected for photocopying should be passed to Events Servicing staff at the meeting with a completed **Photostats Script Selection Form**.

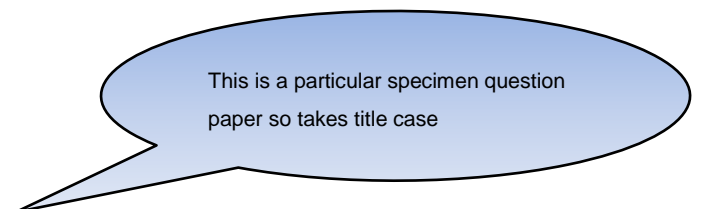
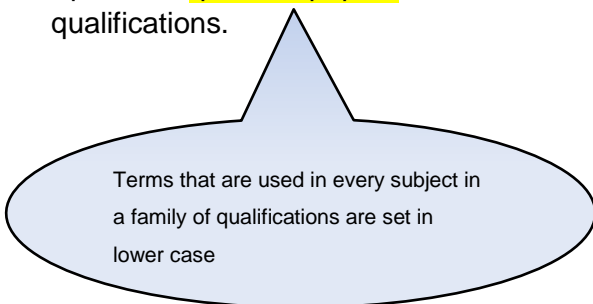


but

Clear instructions should be given on whether **photostats** are to be issued to Markers...

and

Specimen **question papers** are available for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications.



Part 1 of the **English: Critical Reading Specimen Question Paper** includes sample questions for all texts on the set Scottish text list.

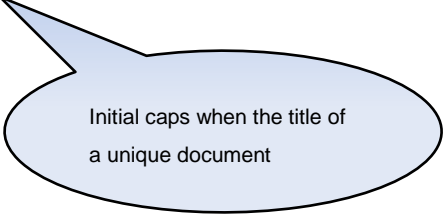
Terminology associated with SQA qualifications, processes or events is set in lower case, unless part of a document title.

Examples

Centres are reminded that **assessment standards** 1.1 to 1.6 can be achieved independently.

There is no requirement for separate **marker check** or **finalisation** procedures after the **central marking event**.

The **HN Chemistry Internal Assessment Report 2015** is a good exemplar of an **internal assessment report**.



Initial caps when the title of a unique document

There are two parts to **results services**:

The exceptional circumstances consideration service

This service supports candidates who have been unable to attend an externally assessed timetabled examination...

Post-results services

Our **post-results services** can be used where a school or college has concerns about a candidate's certificated result...

Titles of web pages and menu items are set in sentence case.

Examples

Information for employers and training providers

and

Past papers and marking instructions

Positions or roles of SQA employees and appointees are set in title case when referring to individuals, but use lower case when referring to positions or roles in general.

Examples

Sam Smith, **Qualifications Manager**, was recently appointed to the...

but

SQA **qualifications officers** are responsible to a **qualifications manager**.

Overall, **external verifiers** found that the centres sampled had a clear understanding of the requirements for...

A **nominee** represents their school/college and local authority (where appropriate) in assisting SQA with the maintenance of national standards of the qualifications within their subject area.

More information

If you would like more information or advice about how we use capitals, SQA's editors in the Marketing department are on hand to provide expert guidance.

You can get in touch by e-mailing marketing@sqa.org.uk and asking for editorial support. Alternatively, read our [Publishing and Writing Community on Connections](#) for further hints and tips.

There are also more examples in the tables on the following pages.

More examples of what to set in capitals and what to set in lower case

Use title case for the titles of documents and publications
Estimates, Absentees and Assessment Appeals
General Marking Instructions
Writing for SQA
SQA's Annual Report
Centre News
SQA Exam Timetable 2016
Your Exams
SQA's Customer Charter
Arrangements for HNC in Accounting
HN Chemistry Internal Assessment Report 2015

Use title case for titles of forms
Attendance Register
C Grade Marker Form
Grade Boundary Decision Making Form
Marks Sheets
Review Lists
Script Delivery Notification Form
External Verification Report Form
Photostats: Centre Selection Form
Flyleaf
Verification Sample Form
Candidate Assessment Record

Use lower case for names of SQA events and processes
appeals process
assessment arrangements
awarding meeting
central marking
central verification
events servicing
exceptional circumstances
external assessment
external verification
grade boundary setting
internal assessment
internal verification
item analysis
marker briefing
marker check
markers' meetings

marking procedures
marking process
performance report
portfolio approach
post-results services
preparation meeting
prior verification
qualification approval and verification
results services
SQA marking protocols
standardisation
visiting verification

Use lower case for terminology associated with SQA qualifications
accepted
adapted digital question papers
added value unit
arrangements document
assessable element
assessment exemplar
assessor
assignment
award of pass or fail
awarding body
centre
course
course grade descriptions
course specification
coursework
credits (value of a qualification)
curriculum areas
estimate
estimate report
evidence requirements
examiner
experiences and outcomes
external verifier
external verifier visit plan
grade boundary marks
grade related criteria
graded unit
group award
group award specification
in-service day
instrument of assessment
internal assessment report
internal verifier

key performance measures (KPM)
knowledge and understanding
knowledge and understanding requirements
level 8 descriptor
level descriptors for SCQF level 9
marker's report
marking guidelines
marking instructions
marking scheme
marking standard
multiple-choice question
national ratings
national standard
no award
nominee
not accepted
notional learning hours
open-book assessment
outcome
peer-assessment
performance criteria
practical examination
principal assessor
principal assessor correspondence
project-based assessment
qualifications manager/officer
question paper
re-assessment
sector skills councils
self-assessment
self-evaluation
specialist award
specific marking instructions
SQA co-ordinator
standard-setting bodies
unit
unit specification
unit-by-unit approach

Other terms
further education
higher education
internet
sector skills council (unless part of an SSC's name)
standards-setting body