



Scottish Qualifications Authority
Ùghdarras Theisteanas Na H-Alba

Our ref: HN Graded Units
20 June 2018

Contact: RPSS
Direct line: 0845 213 5418
RPSSAdmin@sqa.org.uk

Dear colleague,

Conditions of assessment in Higher National Graded Units

Following discussions with the SQA College Quality Focus Group, we have implemented clarified approaches to re-assessment, remediation, and reasonable assistance in our Higher National Graded Units. These clarified approaches bring the use of both remediation and reasonable assistance closer in line with approaches used in National Course coursework assessments.

Both the Higher National project-based and examination-based specifications have been updated to include this information, and all graded units validated from June 2018 onwards will use these updated specifications.

All existing graded unit specifications will be updated over the coming months, and will be made available on the 'HN Search' facility of the SQA website.

However, to ensure that consistent conditions of assessment are applied in session 2018–19, the 'Conditions of assessment' outlined in the Appendix will apply to all existing graded units.

Please note that these updated conditions overwrite any existing statements in graded units. External verifiers will be notified of this change. I would be grateful if you could forward this letter to colleagues who will be involved in the assessment and/or internal verification of Higher National Graded Units in session 2018–19.

Yours faithfully,

James Morgan

Head of Research, Policy, Standards and Statistics

Conditions of assessment: Project-based Graded Units

Reasonable assistance

Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing candidates with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes.

In relation to the assessment of Higher National Project-based Graded Units, assessors may provide advice, clarification, and guidance during the time between the distribution of the project instructions and the completion date, ie at each stage of the project.

Remediation

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify candidate responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. In either case, such instances must be formally noted by the assessor, either in writing or recording, and be made available to the internal and external verifier.

In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, candidates must be given the opportunity for remediation at each stage of the project.

Re-assessment

The evidence for a Higher National Project-based Graded Unit is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, each of which has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. This means that any re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage. The overall grade is derived from the total number of marks *across all* sections, and should reflect the ability of the candidate to work autonomously and the amount of support required. In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, candidates who have failed any stage of the project and have been unable to provide the necessary evidence through remediation must be given the opportunity for re-assessment of that stage.

Any candidate who has failed their graded unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity, or in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. In the case of project-based graded units, this must be done using a substantially different project.

Final candidate grade

The final grading given must reflect the quality of the candidate's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Candidates must be awarded the highest grade achieved — whether through first submission or through any re-assessment, remediation, and/or reasonable assistance provided.

Conditions of assessment: Examination-based Graded Units

Reasonable assistance

Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing candidates with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes.

In relation to the assessment of Higher National Examination-based Graded Units, assessors may provide advice and guidance on examination technique and clarification on the meaning of command words which may appear within an examination paper, prior to the formal examination.

Remediation

Remediation is not allowed in Examination-based Graded Unit assessments.

Re-assessment

Any candidate who has failed their Higher National Examination-based Graded Unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity, or in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. This must be done by using a substantially different examination.

Final candidate grade

The final grading given must reflect the quality of the candidate's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Candidates must be awarded the highest grade achieved, whether through first sitting or through any re-assessment.

