

History



Welcome to the first edition of our new-look subject update, which replaces the letter you would have received previously. This update complements our regular monthly and weekly communications, with more information relevant to your subject, and details of what we have been working on.

I would encourage you to make regular use of our subject pages, where you will find support documents, answers to **Common Questions**, and links to other areas of interest. Documents that must be treated confidentially can be found on our secure site and you can arrange access to these through your SQA Co-ordinator.

I hope you find the following update helpful, and please contact me if you have any questions.

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Contacting the team

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Updates

National 5 assignment

The Course Assessment Task and the Instructions for Candidates have been revised in order to provide guidance and clarification of the requirements for the Resource Sheet for the National 5 assignment. The template for the Resource Sheet has also been amended following feedback from teachers.

Time extended for National 5 History question paper

It has been agreed that the duration of the National 5 History exam will be extended by 15 minutes so that, from 2015 onwards, candidates will have 1 hour and 45 minutes to complete the question paper. This follows feedback from practitioners and evidence gathered during a review of the 2014 exams. The 2015 exam timetable on SQA's website has now been updated to reflect this change.

For further information, please see the 'Updates and announcements' section of the **National 5 History** web page.

New Higher: example question papers

We will be publishing an additional example question paper for this Course. This will show you how existing past paper questions or items have been amended and adapted for use as support for Course assessment preparation. This will provide an additional support for centres, alongside the specimen question paper previously published and the guidance on the use of past papers document.

Advanced Higher

The development of the new Advanced Higher History Course is progressing with the support of the Subject Working Group and Qualifications Design Team. The new Advanced Higher Course will build on the strengths of the existing Advanced Higher Course.

Following recent research into the area, the mandatory content specification for Scotland: The Wars of Independence, 1284–1357 field of study has been updated. The updated mandatory content for this field of study is as follows:

- ◆ The kingdom under Alexander III, 1249–1286
 - ◆ The guardianship and the great cause, 1286–1292
 - ◆ The reign of King John, 1292–1296
 - ◆ Edward I's occupation of Scotland, 1296–1297
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- ◆ The contribution of William Wallace, 1297–1305
 - ◆ Scottish resistance and English invasions, 1298–1305
 - ◆ Usurpation and civil war, 1306–1309
 - ◆ King Robert and the war against England, 1310–1323
 - ◆ King Robert and the governance of Scotland, 1309–1320
 - ◆ Succession and peace, 1324–1334

These changes will be published, with the final versions of all mandatory Course documents, in June 2015.

In the future we will publish the following documents to support implementation of the new Advanced Higher Course:

- ◆ Unit assessment support documents in three packages:
 - package 1 – October 2014
 - package 2 – February 2015
 - package 3 – April 2015
- ◆ the Advanced Higher Course comparison document, covering points of change and areas of stability, which will illustrate progression from Higher and provide further details on the Course content and assessment
- ◆ Guidance on the use of past paper questions for Advanced Higher
- ◆ Specimen question paper
- ◆ Coursework documentation
- ◆ final versions of all mandatory Course documents which will be published in June 2015

Support and guidance

Finalised Marking Instructions for the 2014 National 5 History question paper will be published on the relevant subject pages of SQA's website.

Guidance on performance in external Course assessments and evidence generated for internal assessment is published annually. This includes Course Reports, External Assessment Reports and Verification Key Messages, all of which will be available in the autumn via the relevant subject pages of SQA's website. Internal Assessment Reports will not be published for the new National Courses.

The following Verification Key Messages are now available:

- ◆ **National 3 to National 5 History**

Please take time to read the above report as it contains useful feedback on candidate performance in 2013–14.

Staff News

A Subject Implementation Manager for History (Denise Dunlop) has been appointed to support the delivery of the new qualifications. If you would like to get in touch with Denise, in the first instance please contact Hilary or Duncan.

Looking ahead to 2014–15

We would like to express our gratitude and extend our thanks to all those who have undertaken duties in session 2013–14. We appreciate the work that all the teams carry out and look forward to continuing to work with them during session 2014–15.

Recruitment opportunities

We are currently in the process of recruiting for a number of vacancies that we are looking to fill between now and February 2015. Vacancies include new and replacement appointments for the following roles in relation to the new qualifications:

- ◆ Advanced Higher Item Writers and Item Checkers
- ◆ Advanced Higher Question Paper Reviewers and Question Paper Validator
- ◆ Higher Markers
- ◆ National 5 Markers

For more information, please visit <http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfeappointeevacancies>

Understanding Standards

Throughout session 2014–15, we will be publishing a range of Understanding Standards materials for both Unit and Course assessment. These materials will include candidate evidence with commentaries and can be used by centres for training and bench-marking purposes. We will also run Understanding Standards events for Unit assessment, for Nominees to share knowledge of Unit assessment with their colleagues. In addition, we will run Understanding Standards events for Course assessment for National 5, which will be open to all subject specialists.

Further information will follow in SQA's weekly and monthly centre updates.
