

## Physics

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This update contains information relevant to your subject and details of the support available to you.

We also publish updates on the new National Courses in the 'Updates and Announcements' section of the relevant [subject pages](#). 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. You can also sign up for 'My Alerts', SQA's e-mail update service, that notifies you whenever content you are interested in is added or updated on our website. Visit [www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts](http://www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts) to register.

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

**Andy Shield**  
Qualifications Manager

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## The Qualifications Team

**Andy Shield**  
Qualifications Manager

**Sheron Ross**  
Qualifications Officer

## Key messages from Diet 2014–15

### Course Reports

We strongly recommend that you read the annual Course Reports for the subject(s) and levels you are teaching. These reports are produced following the annual diet of exams and are published by the end of October. The reports provide informed and valuable comment on the assessment for each Component in the Course, and include a summary of:

- candidate performance in the Course assessment
- areas in which candidates performed well
- areas which candidates found demanding

The reports also contain advice on preparing future candidates, and statistical data relating to grade boundaries. Course Reports are available from the relevant [subject pages](#) of our website.

### Verification Key Messages

Key Messages from round 2 of verification in session 2014–15 were published over the summer. They are available from the relevant [subject pages](#), where you can access them from the 'Verification and Course Reports' heading in the 'Assessment Support' section.

### Finalised 2015 Marking Instructions

The finalised 2015 Marking Instructions for Physics question papers have been published on the [past papers](#) section of our website.

## Documents and assessment support materials

It is important that you read the full suite of documents for your Course, as well as those relating to assessment, and that you refer to the latest versions.

Information on documents and assessment support materials for National 1 to Advanced Higher can be found at [www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments](http://www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments)

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## National 3 to Higher documents

As we communicated in our May 2015 subject update, we updated some documents for National 5 and Higher Physics for use in session 2015–16. These updates were made in April and May 2015. One major change was the removal of Assessment Standards 2.2 and 2.3 from the National 5 Physics Unit Specifications:

- *Physics: Dynamics and Space* (H258 75)
- *Physics: Electricity and Energy* (H256 75)
- *Physics: Waves and Radiation* (H25A 75)

Assessment Standard 2.4: Problem Solving was renumbered as Assessment Standard 2.2. This was based on considerable stakeholder feedback, and removal of the Assessment Standards will reduce the assessment burden at National 5. Please note that Assessment Standards 2.2 and 2.3 were retained at National 3 and National 4 levels.

In addition to the updated National 5 Unit Specifications, a number of other documents were also updated. This included the Higher Physics Course Assessment Specification and Course and Unit Support Notes; the National 5 Physics Course Assessment Specification and Course and Unit Support Notes; and the National 4 Course and Unit Support Notes.

You can find more details of these revisions in the [May 2015 subject update](#)

## National 5 and Higher Unit assessment support

In August 2015, we updated some Unit assessment support materials for National 5 and Higher. This follows the revisions to Unit Specifications that were made in April 2015, and feedback gathered from centres during session 2014–15.

Please refer to the ‘Notification of Changes’ tables for your curricular area, as these provide a summary of the changes to each document and include details of the revised version numbers. These are available from [www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges)

The use of SQA-produced Unit assessments is not mandatory; however, if you are using them, we strongly encourage you to use the most up-to-date versions. Please note that you may continue to use existing versions of the Unit assessments until the end of session 2015–16 and both will be accepted for verification purposes.

The updated Unit assessment support materials are available from our secure website and you can arrange access to them through your SQA Co-ordinator.

Further information on the reasons for the changes to Unit assessment support, and guidance on the next steps to take, is provided below. This information was also communicated to centres in August 2015.

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Subject	Reason for change	Next steps for centres
Physics National 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>H258 75 <i>Physics: Dynamics and Space</i> package 1: Unit-by-Unit approach</b></li> <li>• <b>H25A 75 <i>Physics: Waves and Radiation</i> package 1: Unit-by-Unit approach</b></li> <li>• <b>H256 75 <i>Physics: Electricity and Energy</i> package 1: Unit-by-Unit approach</b></li> <li>• <b>Physics package 2: combined approach</b></li> <li>• <b>Physics package 3: portfolio approach</b></li> </ul> <p>In all packs, Assessment Standards 2.2 and 2.3 have been removed. Assessment Standard 2.4 has been renumbered 2.2. Formatting has been amended to be consistent with other Unit assessment support packs.</p> <p>The removal of Assessment Standards 2.2 and 2.3 followed considerable stakeholder feedback and results in a reduction in the volume of assessment at National 5 level.</p>	Centres are advised to download new copies of the revised documents.
Physics Higher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>H4KY 76 <i>Physics: Our Dynamic Universe</i> package 1: Unit-by-Unit approach</b> Updated to amend errors and ambiguities in both questions and marking guidance. In particular, questions 1, 3, 5 and 6. Formatting amended for consistency and style.</li> <li>• <b>H4L0 76 <i>Physics: Particles and Waves</i> package 1: Unit-by-Unit approach</b> Updated to amend errors and ambiguities in both questions and marking guidance. In particular, questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Formatting amended for consistency and style.</li> <li>• <b>H4KX 76 <i>Physics: Electricity</i> package 1: Unit-by-Unit approach</b> Updated to amend errors and ambiguities in both questions and marking guidance. In particular, questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Formatting amended for consistency and style.</li> <li>• <b><i>Researching Physics</i>: package 1: Unit-by-Unit approach</b> Updated to amend errors and ambiguities. Formatting amended for consistency and style.</li> <li>• <b>Physics package 2: combined approach</b> Updated to amend errors and ambiguities in both questions and marking guidance. In particular <i>Our Dynamic Universe</i> questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6; <i>Particles &amp; Waves</i> questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; <i>Electricity</i> questions 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6.</li> </ul>	Centres are advised to download new copies of the revised documents.

	<p>Formatting amended for consistency and style.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Physics package 3: portfolio approach</b> Updated to amend errors and ambiguities. Formatting amended for consistency and style</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, in all Unit assessment support packs, guidance has been added to the judging evidence tables, including clarifying the requirement for uncertainties to be included for Assessment Standard 1.3.</p> <p>These changes are based on both stakeholder feedback and issues identified through verification, where question wording was ambiguous or was prompting a degree of inconsistency in centre assessment decisions.</p>	
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Unit assessment support materials are available from our secure website and you can arrange access to them through your SQA Co-ordinator. To find out more about using our Unit assessment support packs, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment)

## National 5 and Higher Coursework information

The National 5 and Higher Physics Assignment Marking Instructions were updated during main Diet 2015 to provide further clarity to assist Markers and to benefit candidates. The National 5 and Higher Physics Coursework Assessment Task and General Assessment Information documents have been updated to reflect these revisions.

## Higher Exemplar Question Paper

In September 2015, minor typographical amendments were made to the Higher Exemplar Question Paper which can be accessed from the Physics [subject pages](#)

## Advanced Higher documents

In April and May 2015, we updated the mandatory documents and Course/Unit Support Notes for Advanced Higher. You can view the Notification of changes spreadsheets for National 3 to Higher, and Advanced Higher at [www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjectchanges)

## Advanced Higher Specimen Question Paper

In September 2015, minor typographical amendments were made to the Advanced Higher Specimen Question Paper which can be accessed from the Physics [subject pages](#)

## Advanced Higher Exemplar Question Papers

In December 2015, we will publish Exemplar Question Papers for all new Advanced Higher Courses that include a question paper as part of the Course assessment.

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## Coming up in 2015–16

### Understanding Standards 2015–16

From the end of October 2015, we will publish further Understanding Standards packs for National 1 to Higher. These packs contain candidate evidence and commentaries for Unit assessment and internally assessed Components of Course assessment.

From November 2015 to January 2016, we will hold subject-specific Understanding Standards events for teachers and lecturers. The main focus of these events will be on Course assessment at Higher. Understanding Standards events for Higher Physics will take place on the following dates:

- 30 October Inverness
- 7 November Edinburgh
- 14 November Aberdeen
- 23 November Glasgow
- 5 December Stirling

Materials from the recent Nominee training events will also be published on our website. For more information, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/understandingstandards](http://www.sqa.org.uk/understandingstandards)

Details of the Understanding Standards materials for each subject are available from the [subject pages](#)

### National 4 Added Value Units

You now have the option of developing your own National 4 Added Value Unit assessments for use with candidates.

Please note that this is not a requirement and you can continue to use SQA-produced Added Value Unit assessments. Most SQA-produced Added Value Unit assessments already allow considerable flexibility in the choice of a context for the assessment, while some provide a context that you can change.

If you choose to develop your own Added Value Unit assessment, we strongly advise submitting it to us for prior verification before using it with candidates.

Further information can be found at [www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/unitassessment)

### Marker recruitment opportunities for 2016

We are now accepting Marker applications from teaching professionals to contribute to the 2016 examination diet. If you are interested in joining us as a Marker please visit the [appointee opportunities section of our website](#) where you will find a marker advert for all subjects and levels, with details of the role.

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Our current Markers will confirm to you that the experience of marking helps increase their awareness of the demands of Course assessment and that marking is excellent professional and personal development.

Please check [www.sqa.org.uk/appointees](http://www.sqa.org.uk/appointees) regularly for other appointee opportunities which may be of interest to you.

#### Contact us

For centre enquiries, please contact our Customer Support Team:

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