

Geography

The Qualifications Team

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Diet 2018

Advanced Higher Geography coursework

Changes have been made to the marking instructions for both parts of the Advanced Higher Geography project–folio. The purpose of these changes is to provide further clarity for markers and to make marks more accessible to candidates. The coursework assessment task for Advanced Higher Geography will be updated to reflect these changes to the marking instructions.

Course reports

Please read the annual course reports for Geography. We produce these reports following the exam diet and they provide information on how candidates performed in course assessment for National Qualifications.

The course reports include a summary of areas candidates performed well in and areas candidates found demanding. They also contain advice on preparing future candidates and statistical data relating to grade boundaries. Course reports are available from the [subject pages](#) of our website.

Coursework

Conditions of assessment for coursework

During the 2018 diet, we saw an increase in incidences of potential malpractice, where some centres had not followed the required conditions of assessment. Conditions of assessment for coursework must be applied consistently in all centres. This ensures fairness for all candidates.

Resource sheets (also referred to as research evidence or processed information sheets) **must** be submitted to SQA with candidate evidence. They show that candidates have undertaken the research stage of their coursework and enable markers to check if the candidate has copied information directly from the resource sheet, as marks are not awarded for this. This ensures that marks are awarded equitably and fairly across all candidates.

In addition, it is very important that teachers and lecturers adhere to the conditions of assessment when preparing candidates for their assessment. Teachers and lecturers must ensure that the correct assessment conditions are applied to balance the need for support without giving too much assistance. For example, drafting, redrafting and providing detailed feedback for individual candidates is not appropriate as this could compromise the authenticity of the evidence submitted to SQA, and potentially advantage or disadvantage candidates. Giving too much assistance can lead to over-direction which is a form of malpractice and threatens the integrity and validity of assessment. SQA investigates all reported instances where assessment conditions have not been applied. This is to protect the national standard of our qualifications and ensure fairness for all candidates across Scotland.

Please ensure you refer to the following documents when conducting coursework with your candidates. These documents detail the specific conditions of assessment that must be applied for each assessment:

- course specification (National 5 and Higher)
- course assessment specification (Advanced Higher)
- coursework assessment task

You must also refer to our [Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#), which provides important information on the time and volume of assessment, the use of resources, and the supervision, control and authentication of assessment — including examples.

Submitting coursework

Please ensure your candidates use the current, published coursework assessment tasks.

Higher

Online resources to help you prepare for Higher assessment

As part of our Understanding Standards programme, we are providing a range of online resources to help you develop your understanding of the standards required in the revised course assessments for Higher. We have tailored this to each subject. Resources include:

- **Presentations with audio** — a subject-specific presentation with an audio narration, to talk you through the requirements of the Higher assessment.
- **Candidate evidence and commentaries** — examples of candidate assessment evidence with a written commentary, to explain why the evidence has or has not met the required standards for the revised assessment. These are the materials from the Understanding Standards events.

You can access these materials via the 'Understanding Standards' tab on the Higher subject page.

Find out more about the Understanding Standards programme at www.sqa.org.uk/understandingstandards.

Units that were previously part of the Higher course

The units that were previously part of the Higher course are now available as freestanding units at SCQF level 6. These units no longer contribute to the Higher course.

We have removed references to Higher courses from the freestanding unit specifications, which are available from the freestanding units web page for each subject. There is a link to the freestanding units page from the 'see also' section on the [subject landing page](#).

Advanced Higher

Changes to assessment in Advanced Higher courses from session 2019–20

We will remove units and unit assessments from Advanced Higher courses for session 2019–20. We have started our review of the Advanced Higher course assessments and we have been working closely with our National Qualifications Support Teams (NQSTs) to identify the appropriate changes for each subject. Our NQSTs include teachers and lecturers who currently deliver National Courses and representatives of professional associations.

New and revised Advanced Higher materials will be published as follows:

End of April 2019	Revised Advanced Higher course specifications
End of May to end of September 2019	Course support notes New and revised specimen question papers New and revised coursework assessment tasks

We will provide further information about the changes to Advanced Higher assessment by the end of January 2019.

Further information and guidance

Higher Geography

The following is a brief summary of the changes to Higher Geography from session 2018–19.

- **There are two question papers:**
 - Question paper 1: Physical environments and human environments (100 marks), 1 hour and 50 minutes.
 - Question paper 2: Global issues and geographical skills (60 marks), 1 hour and 10 minutes.
- **Physical environments section:**
 - Formation of erosional and depositional features in river landscapes has been reintroduced to 'hydrosphere' (V shaped valley, waterfall, meander, oxbow lake).
 - Erosional and depositional features have been specified in 'lithosphere'.
 - Rural land use conflicts and their management has been removed from 'lithosphere'.
- **Human environments section:**
 - Rural land use conflicts and their management related to either a glaciated **or** a coastal landscape has been relocated to the 'rural' section.
 - One case study is required instead of two.
- **Global issues section:**
 - Trade, aid and geopolitics has been removed.
- **Assignment:**
 - 'Use of and reference to Processed Information' has increased to 6 marks (from 4 marks).
 - 'Communicating information' has decreased to 2 marks (from 4 marks).

Verification key messages

Key messages from rounds 1 and 2 of verification in session 2017–18 are available on the relevant [subject pages](#) of our website. You can access them from the 'Course Reports' and 'Verification and Course Reports' tabs.

The reports provide comments on good practice for assessment approaches and for making assessment judgements.

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