



Common questions about National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Accounting

Unit assessment

Can units be assessed under open-book conditions?

Yes. You can assess units under open-book or closed-book conditions. This is a decision for teachers and lecturers.

Where a candidate does not pass one part of a unit assessment, does the whole unit need to be re-assessed?

No. If the evidence does not meet the standard required or if it is incomplete, you only need to re-assess that specific assessment standard or outcome.

Where assessment standard thresholds apply, you can find details in the unit specifications. If a candidate successfully meets the requirements of the specified number of assessment standards they will be judged to have passed the unit overall and no further re-assessment is required.

Is oral questioning acceptable for re-assessment?

Yes, where appropriate, but you must document this for verification purposes.

Course assessment — National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher

Will the National 5 and Higher Accounting assignments be different every year?

Yes. We provide annually-released assignments for each level. Centres are notified of the topics for each assignment in advance and these will be available on the [subject level pages](#).

When does SQA release the National 5 and Higher assignments to centres?

The SQA co-ordinator receives the assignments and associated e-files from SQA prior to the assessment period.

Do centres need to print the assignments for their candidates?

No. For the pilot in session 2019–20, centres no longer need to print the assignments from SQA's secure website. SQA will print and send the assignments directly to SQA co-ordinators in presenting centres for invigilators to distribute. The e-files will be released through the SQA co-ordinator.

Can Accounting assignments be completed under open-book conditions?

No. The assignments must be conducted under a high degree of supervision and control and candidates must be in direct sight of the invigilator, as detailed in the National 5 and Higher course specifications.

Must candidates use absolute cells references for the formulae in the National 5 accounting assignment?

No. Candidates are not penalised if there are no absolute cell references. It is good practice and can save time, but the main thing is that candidates use a formula whenever they perform a calculation.

Must candidates use absolute cells references for the formulae in the Higher accounting assignment?

Yes. Candidates must use absolute cell references to gain marks at this level.

Does SQA provide formulae to candidates during the assessment?

Yes. We provide a formulae sheet for the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher external assessments, when appropriate. Centres should provide the formulae sheet for internal assessments for all levels when required.

If a topic is included in the assignment at National 5 or Higher, could it also appear in the final exam?

Perhaps. We don't assess the same topic in the same way in both the assignment and question paper in any one session. If there is a practical question in the assignment, there won't be a practical question on the same topic in the question paper. However, there may be a theory question.

When assessing financial statements, we may class Income Statements and Statements of Financial Position as separate topics, for example if we assess an Income Statement in the assignment, we may assess a Statement of Financial Position in the question paper. Financial statements is the only topic where this happens.

What type of paper do SQA provide for candidates in the question papers?

At all levels, we provide candidates with booklets that may contain templates for some questions.

We provide National 5 candidates with a paper specific answer booklet which includes templates where required. We provide Higher and Advanced Higher candidates with accounting paper booklets for answering questions without templates.

Is there a template for the Advanced Higher project?

Yes. The template is available on the Advanced Higher Accounting subject level page on SQA's website. Candidates can type directly in the template or handwrite their project on the template.

Course content

Do candidates need to know the topic of petty cash for National 5?

No. Petty cash is not in the course specification and is not part of the course, although we may refer to it as part of ledgers.

At National 5, will candidates need to learn the different types of error, for example omission or principle?

Yes. We assess knowledge of the different types of error, so candidates need to know this for theory marks.

Will candidates need to create a suspense account?

No. We do not assess suspense accounts.

Do Higher candidates need to know the National 5 formulae?

No. We do not assess Higher candidates on National 5 formulae.

For investment appraisal rate of return, do candidates need to be familiar with both formulae relating to initial investment and average investment?

No. We will direct candidates towards the use of the initial investment formula.

When marking a cash budget, if a candidate has a figure wrong in all three columns, for example Cash or Credit sales, how many errors would this be?

This would be three errors. It would be one error for **each time**, for example if a candidate enters 20% instead of 30%, or inserts information in the wrong month.

If a candidate does not write the required labels on a Financial Statement, how many errors would this be?

Where we allocate a mark to more than one label, all labels must be evident to gain the mark. Refer to the marking instructions for details.

General questions

What other resources are available?

As part of our Understanding Standards programme, we provide a range of online resources to help you understand what is required in the course assessments for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. Understanding Standards materials are available from www.understandingstandards.org.uk.

National Qualification questions and answers can be found on the [frequently asked questions section](#) of SQA's website.

Questions and answers on the changes to National Courses can be found at www.sqa.org.uk/nqchanges