



Common questions about National 3, National 4, National 5 and Higher Administration and IT

Unit assessment

How can I re-assess candidates?

You can re-assess candidates using materials from one of the other unit assessment packs or by producing your own assessments to meet the assessment criteria. Where appropriate, oral questioning is acceptable for re-assessment, but you must document this for verification purposes.

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.

Can I produce my own assessment materials?

Yes. If you are making major changes to the questions and/or activities in the unit support packs, or writing your own, you are advised to have your materials 'prior verified' by SQA before you use them.

Find out more about [SQA's prior verification service](#).

Do all units in the National 3 and National 4 courses assess keyboarding skills?

No. We do not assess keyboarding skills in the National 4 Administrative Practices unit. However, keyboarding skills are part of the error tolerance for all other units, as follows:

- ◆ National 3 units — 1 error per 10 words
- ◆ National 4 units — 1 error per 15 words

Do all SCQF level 5 and 6 units assess keyboarding skills?

No. We do not assess keyboarding skills in the Administrative Practices (SCQF level 5) unit or the Administrative Theory and Practice (SCQF level 6) unit. However, keyboarding skills are part of the error tolerance for all other units, as follows:

- ◆ SCQF level 5 freestanding units — 1 error per 20 words
- ◆ SCQF level 6 freestanding units — 1 error per 25 words

Course assessment — National 5 and Higher

Does the maximum time for the assignments and National 5 question paper include printing time?

No. Candidates can have additional time for printing for both the National 5 and Higher assignments, and the National 5 question paper. However, we anticipate that candidates will print individual tasks as they work through the assessments.

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

The assignments and associated e-files are published on SQA's secure website. We will notify centres in advance when they will be available. You can arrange access to the assignments and e-files through your SQA co-ordinator.

How long do candidates have to complete the National 5 assignment?

Candidates have three hours to complete the assignment (excluding printing time). They must complete it in a maximum of two sittings, under a high degree of supervision and control.

If additional printing time is required, candidates should complete this immediately after each sitting. This is a closed-book assignment.

How long do candidates have to complete the Higher assignment?

Candidates have two hours to complete the assignment (excluding printing time). They must complete it in one continuous sitting, under a high degree of supervision and control.

If additional printing time is required, candidates must complete this immediately after. Everyone in your centre must complete the assignment on the same day. If not, you must inform SQA when you submit the assignments. This is a closed-book assignment.

Is there a question paper at National 5 and what does it assess?

Yes. The question paper assesses IT functions in spreadsheet and database applications, and administration theory. During the exam diet, candidates complete all tasks in the question paper using IT applications. The exam lasts two hours (excluding printing time) and is worth 50 marks.

Can a teacher, lecturer and/or technician be in the room during the National 5 exam?

No. Once the question paper packet is open, only invigilators can be in the room. However, a teacher, lecturer and/or technician should be available to assist with any technical issues that may occur.

What should candidates be able to access during the National 5 exam?

Candidates must have access to the e-files for the question paper issued by SQA. They must not have access to any other files or the internet.

When are the e-files available for the National 5 exam?

SQA releases the e-files to SQA co-ordinators approximately three days before the exam to allow teachers, lecturers and/or technicians to check that the files are compatible with the system candidates will use for the exam.

Centres should only transfer the e-files one hour before the scheduled start time of the exam.

General

Where can I find information about course content for National 5 and Higher?

Information about course content is in the course specifications, available on the [subject level pages](#) of SQA's website.

Are 'meetings' included in the Higher course?

Yes. Refer to the course specification for specific details on what could be assessed. Questions from past papers also include examples of questions about meetings.

In a spreadsheet question, would it be acceptable to name the cell where an absolute cell reference is required?

Yes. Naming a cell is one way of using an absolute cell reference.

What is the difference between an aggregate function and a summary calculation?

An aggregate function is used within the query function to summarise data. It groups information by the data within a field and then performs a summary. For example, grouping on town and then counting how many shops are in each town

A summary calculation is used in a report and can be used as part of the wizard function before the report is completed. Alternatively, the summary calculation can be carried out once the report is complete using the totals function within design or layout views.

What should candidates include for e-diary printouts?

Candidates should print daily or weekly diary printouts, as specified in the task. However, if the printout is truncated, they should also print the event in such a way that enables keyboarding skills to be assessed.

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 and 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.