



Common questions about National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Economics

Coursework

If a candidate changes level, can they submit their Higher assignment for National 5, without changing it?

No. The Higher assignment is based on the Higher course content and has its own marking criteria.

If a candidate is resitting the National 5 or Higher course, can they resubmit an assignment marked by SQA in a previous session?

No. They must achieve all components of the course assessment (question paper and assignment) in the same session. For the assignment, it may be possible for a candidate to use their previous research material; however, in all cases they must submit a new assignment.

Can candidates select the same topic as others in their class?

Yes. There is no restriction, but they must complete their own research and produce their own report.

In the assignment 'research' section, can candidates gain marks for giving the same value for different sources?

No. If a candidate states that two of their chosen sources are the same value (for example bias), we would only award 1 mark for an explanation for the reason of any bias.

Are candidates able to provide their own opinions?

Yes. If a candidate states their opinion and goes on to develop it, this can form part of their recommendations or conclusions.

Do candidates have to include both conclusions and recommendations?

No. Candidates can include any combination of conclusions and/or recommendations. However, they might find it difficult to gain full marks if they only give conclusions, or only recommendations.

What is the difference between analysis and conclusion in the assignment?

An analysis point is a statement about the meaning of a finding.

A conclusion is a statement giving a synopsis of a point (or several linked points) and then gives a justification for using it.

Conditions of assessment for coursework

What is the maximum length of the assignment or project?

The final report should be **no longer than**:

- ◆ National 5 — 1,300 words
 - ◆ Higher — 2,000 words
 - ◆ Advanced Higher — 3,500 to 4,000 words
- (excluding references and appendices)

The actual word count must be added to the candidate details flyleaf that is submitted along with their assignment or project. If the word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty is applied.

The number of pages of appendices should be **no more than**:

- ◆ National 5 — two pages
- ◆ Higher — four pages

How long do candidates have to complete the assignment?

Candidates should be able to complete the assignment in a notional 5 hours for National 5, and a notional 8 hours for Higher. This includes time for secondary research and producing the report. Candidates who choose to carry out field research may need additional time to complete their research.

We recommend that candidates produce their report over time, as there are no longer discrete research and write-up phases. This means that they can complete the initial stages of the report outwith the classroom.

Under what assessment conditions do candidates complete the assignment report?

We recommend that candidates complete their final report within the learning and teaching setting, as this helps ensure that the work presented is their own.

You must put in place ways to authenticate candidate evidence and/or research that is not completed within the learning and teaching setting.

You can find further information regarding coursework conditions in the [Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#) on SQA's website.

Do candidates need to use the SQA assignment notes document when completing their assignment?

No. It is not mandatory, however, the assignment notes document gives candidates a structure to help them plan and complete their assignment, so that they are less likely to miss anything out.

Do candidates need to use the SQA assignment template for National 5 and Higher?

Yes. We scan National 5 and Higher assignments so we can electronically mark them. To ensure complete accuracy in the scanning process, candidates **must** use the template when submitting their assignment.

You can find the templates, and more detailed guidance for submitting assignments on the relevant subject level page, under the 'Coursework' tab on the [Economics pages](#) on SQA's website.

Question papers

In 'compare' or 'distinguish' questions, are candidates penalised for not using link words such as 'whereas' or 'both'?

No, but using these terms may help to clarify their answers.

Is it essential that candidates mention the stimulus material in all their answers?

No, only in questions where we specifically ask candidates to refer to the text.

General

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

You can find this in the course specifications (including appendix: course support notes) — these are available on the [Economics pages](#) on SQA's website.

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. You can find [Economics resources](#) on our Understanding Standards website.

You will find general questions and answers about National Qualifications on our website at www.sqa.org.uk/faq.