



# Common questions about National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Physical Education

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## National 4

### **How many physical activities do candidates have to provide evidence for in the *Factors Impacting on Performance* unit?**

While the context for learning can be provided by a range of physical activities, candidates must provide evidence for assessment from a minimum of **one** physical activity.

### **How many physical activities do candidates have to provide evidence for in the *Performance Skills* unit?**

While the context for learning can be provided by a range of physical activities, candidates must provide evidence for assessment from **two** activities. All assessment standards must be met for **each** of these physical activities (ie activity 1 and activity 2).

### **What is the required context for the added value unit assessment?**

The context of assessment must allow candidates to experience a more competitive or demanding performance environment, such as a tournament or competition, an athletics event, a swimming gala, or a gymnastic or dance display. This could be carried out within the centre or between centres. For further information please refer to the National 4 Added Value Unit Specification on the [subject page](#).

## National 5

### **What is the structure of the National 5 Physical Education course?**

Please see page 1 of the National 5 Physical Education Course Specification on the [subject page](#).

## National 5 course assessment — portfolio

### **How many factors does the portfolio cover?**

Within section 1 of the portfolio, all four factors, Mental, Emotional, Physical and Social will be assessed. In section 2 of the portfolio, candidates must select two factors to demonstrate their understanding of the performance development process.

### **Where can I find the portfolio coursework assessment task?**

Coursework assessment tasks that do not change annually can be found on the subject pages. The portfolio coursework assessment task can be found on the National 5 Physical Education [subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading.

### **Do I need to use the SQA portfolio template?**

Yes. SQA has produced the template that candidates **must** use when submitting their Physical Education portfolio. This template can be found on the National 5 Physical Education [subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading. The submission instructions for the National 5 Physical Education portfolio document are also available under the 'Coursework' heading.

## **What is the best way to complete the portfolio?**

Teachers and lecturers should decide on the most suitable method to complete the portfolio. The templates are in Microsoft Word and/or PDF format and Google docs. Candidates can either type or handwrite into these templates. Candidates must use blue or black ink.

## **Does the portfolio have to be completed under supervision?**

Section 1 is conducted under a high degree of supervision and control. Candidates must be within direct sight of the supervisor throughout the session(s). Candidates must not interact with other candidates.

Sections 2 and 3 are conducted under some supervision and control. Candidates do not need to be directly supervised throughout the session(s).

## **When should candidates complete their portfolio?**

The portfolio may be completed at any time during the course. Teachers and lecturers should decide when candidates have sufficient knowledge and skills to undertake the portfolio.

## **Where should candidates complete their portfolio?**

Candidates should complete the portfolio in their centre.

## **Does the portfolio need to be retained between sessions?**

Yes, candidate work must be retained by the centre between sessions. If candidates complete the portfolio electronically the centre should select the most appropriate backup approach. For example, candidates could use a folder on the network which is secured by staff at the end of each classroom session. Deciding how best to retain the portfolio is a centre decision.

## **What resources can candidates use when completing the portfolio?**

When completing section 1, candidates are not allowed access to any resources. For sections 2 and 3, there are no restrictions on the resources that the candidate may have access to but at no time should this include model answers or writing frames such as outlines or headings. Examples of resources which can be used to complete the assessment include spider diagrams, bulleted notes from class or homework, or mind maps of key points. Please refer to the [Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#) document on the [subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading.

## **What feedback is acceptable when completing the portfolio?**

Candidates must complete the assessment independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. During teaching and learning before the assessment has taken place, feedback would be given in order to encourage the candidate to do further work on their own to find the solution, rather than telling them exactly what they need to do to get the marks.

## **Can candidates re-draft any sections of the portfolio?**

As long as feedback has not been given then candidates can amend their work prior to submission. This is not classed as re-drafting. Once the portfolio is submitted candidates should not access it again.

## **What must be attached to the portfolio template?**

Candidates can attach a maximum of four A4 pages of data they have gathered and these pages must have the candidate's SCN (Scottish Candidate Number) at the bottom of each page. They must transfer any relevant information from their Personal Development Programme (PDP) to the PDP table in the portfolio.

## **When does the portfolio need to be submitted to SQA?**

The completed portfolio must be submitted to SQA for marking by the uplift date. Uplift dates can be found in the Delivering National Qualifications Key Dates document on SQA Connect.

## Higher

### **What is the structure of the Higher Physical Education course?**

Please see the Higher Physical Education Course Specification on the [subject page](#).

## Higher question paper

### **What is the structure of the Higher question paper?**

There are three sections in the question paper. The question paper has a mark allocation of 50 marks. The duration of the examination is 2 hours and 30 minutes. More information can be found in the course specification.

### **Where can I find exemplification of the Higher question paper?**

The specimen question paper is available on the [subject page](#). This illustrates the standard, structure and requirements of the question paper candidates will sit. The specimen paper also includes marking instructions and definitions of the command words used.

## Advanced Higher

### **What is the structure of the Advanced Higher Physical Education course?**

Please see page 1 of the Advanced Higher Physical Education Course Specification on the [subject page](#).

### **What is the structure of the Advanced Higher project?**

There are four sections in the project, which has a mark allocation of 70 marks. The assessment is carried out over a period of time. More information can be found in the course specification.

### **Can the project and performance activity be different?**

Yes. But the activities selected must adhere to the 'Acceptable activities for assessment purposes' section in the Performance coursework assessment task.

### **Are there any preferences for the review of sources?**

The sources of information could include books, journals, periodicals, websites and personal interviews. These sources should be current, reliable and relevant to the topic of study.

## **Advanced Higher course assessment**

### **What changes were made to the Advanced Higher Physical Education course for session 2019–20 onwards?**

We made amendments to the marking criteria for the performance. The performance mark criteria includes specific content from the removed *Performance Skills* unit. 'Precision' and 'finesse' have been included in the marking criteria to help teachers and assessors distinguish the exceptional performers in the upper ranges of the marking criteria. The number of marks available for the performance has not changed.

The project now incorporates the content of assessment standard 1.2 'analysing the impact mental, emotional, social and physical factors have on personal performance' from the *Factors Impacting on Performance* unit.

The number of marks available for the project has not changed, although the distribution has changed to ensure an appropriate weighting across the different stages. Previously, candidates needed to take all four factors impacting on performance into account to achieve the *Factors Impacting Performance* unit. To ensure this requirement was covered in the project, stage 4c has been amended to include a requirement for candidates to consider all factors when identifying future development needs.

## **National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher course assessment — performance**

### **What is the structure of the National 5 and Higher performance component?**

60 marks are available at both levels. Candidates must undertake two single performances and each single performance event is marked out of 30. This is 50% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

### **What is the structure of the Advanced Higher performance component?**

The performance component has a mark allocation of 30 marks. Candidates are assessed in one physical activity.

### **How is the performance component assessed?**

The performance is assessed against specific criteria. The assessment criteria is described in the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Coursework assessment task document on the [Physical Education subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading.

## **For National 5 and Higher do the two activities for the course assessment need to be different?**

Yes. Candidates need to be assessed in two different physical activities with significantly different movement and performance skills for their coursework to help ensure that the course assesses a breadth of skills, knowledge and understanding.

## **Who decides which activities are acceptable for the course assessment?**

Teachers and lecturers must decide on acceptable activities by referring to the instructions in the Coursework assessment task document on the [Physical Education subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading.

## **Why did SQA publish instructions on acceptable activities?**

Based on feedback from Understanding Standards events and surveys issued by SQA there were requests from teachers and lecturers for greater clarity around acceptable activities, activities that are not acceptable, and also restrictions on combinations of activities (for National 5 and Higher).

SQA needs to make decisions that will ensure consistency across all centres. There is an enormous number of activities available for candidates, which preserves personalisation and choice.

## **If I don't have expertise in an activity, can someone else help me such as a teacher from another centre or a coach?**

The assessments need to be carried out by qualified PE teachers and lecturers. There are instances of PE teachers from one centre helping another, which is acceptable. Where this is the case, the visiting PE teacher must be involved in agreeing the context for the activity before the assessment takes place to make sure the demand is appropriate for a single performance and must also be involved/included in the centre's internal verification procedures.

## **For National 5 and Higher can a candidate be given a course assessment performance mark for more than two activities and their best scores submitted?**

No. The performance for National 5 and Higher course assessment is two **single** performance events. The context of each performance must be challenging, competitive and/or demanding. Therefore, evidence cannot be gathered over a series of different performance events. This would also apply to candidates undertaking Advanced Higher.

## **How long should the candidate's performance last?**

The performance has to be of sufficient length to allow candidates to demonstrate the required skills, for example, in some activities this would be a set period of play. In others, such as field events, it would be the number of attempts normally given, with decisions being taken and acted on between attempts and still within the duration of the performance.

## **How many candidates should I assess at any one time?**

This will vary depending on the activity but don't try to assess too many at once. You need to be confident that you are able to devote enough time to each candidate in order to observe, assess and record achievement against each of the assessment items.

## **Should I know the candidate's tactics and role in advance of the assessment?**

Yes. It is good practice to understand what the candidate intends to do before the assessment. It may also be appropriate to have a brief discussion with the candidate after their performance to allow the candidate to explain their thought processes.

## **What information should I give to candidates?**

You should give candidates a copy of the 'Instructions to candidates' section of the coursework assessment task document for the performance and the opportunity to see and discuss the assessment items.

## **Is it necessary to record comments when assessing performances?**

Yes. It is necessary to record candidate achievement for each of the performances. Recording documents can be found in the performance coursework assessment task document. Assessors must ensure comments about how assessment judgements have been made for each candidate are included on the documentation.

Centres must retain performance assessment records for one calendar year after completion of the course and these must be made available to SQA on request. This requirement is consistent with our retention policy.

## **Can I video performance assessments and mark them later?**

This is a centre decision. You can find advice on videoing assessments in the Coursework assessment task document on the [Physical Education subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading.

## **What happens if a candidate does not attend their single performance event for reasons beyond their control, or if a candidate is injured during their single performance event?**

Guidance has been produced on what centres should do if a candidate does not attend their single performance event for a reason beyond their control, or if a candidate is injured during their single performance event.

It is **not** for a candidate who believes they have under-performed on the day. The guidance outlines what centres should do if a candidate cannot attend a single performance assessment for reasons beyond their control, or if a candidate is injured during a single performance assessment. It is not for candidates who believe they have underperformed on the day.

The *Guidance for internally assessed coursework component* is available on the [subject page](#) under the 'Coursework' heading.



## **What happens if a candidate wants to appeal their mark for the single performance event?**

As part of a centre's quality assurance system, there must be a documented procedure for dealing with candidate appeals against their internal assessment results if they feel that they have been treated unfairly. If this appeal has not been resolved by the assessor, the internal verifier can have a role in providing a second opinion.

For assessments (such as NQ internally-assessed course assessments) where only a single attempt is permitted within an academic session, no re-assessment attempts are possible.

Advice about recommended stages of the appeal process is included in the [Internal Verification: a guide for centres](#) document:

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