



Common questions about Practical Woodworking

National 5 practical activity

The practical activity changes each year — what happens if candidates do the wrong one?

This shouldn't happen as the practical activity is only available on our secure website and it clearly shows which session it is valid. Candidates must do the current practical activity to gain marks.

Can teachers, lecturers or candidates discuss the practical activity on forums or secure groups?

No. The practical activity is a secure course assessment and the mark contributes to the candidate's overall grade. It is only available on our secure website and cannot be shared or discussed on other forums, including social media.

Is it possible to deliver some content, have the candidate do part of the practical activity, deliver more content and then have the candidate complete the practical activity?

No. Candidates should start the practical activity at an appropriate point in the course, once all content has been delivered and without interruption by periods of learning and teaching.

Can we use the practical activity mark from last session for a resit candidate?

No. We publish a new practical activity annually and it is only valid for that academic session. Candidates resitting a question paper will have to do the practical activity relating to that academic session.

If we are delivering the course over two years, when do we give candidates the practical activity?

Candidate must do the practical activity from the same academic session as the question paper that they are sitting. Additionally, they should start the practical activity at an appropriate point in the course, once all content has been delivered, so it couldn't be part way through the first year of a two-year delivery.

Do candidates with additional support needs get an extra 25% of the allotted practical activity time as standard?

No. There is no 'standard' assessment arrangement for candidates with additional support needs. Centres must contact the assessment arrangements team (aarequests@sqa.org.uk) to provide details of each situation and the assessment arrangements they think are appropriate. We deal with every request on an individual basis to ensure equity for all candidates.

We are having major problems with our machine tools (for example lathe) and cannot use it — what should we do?

Escalate this within your centre as a matter of urgency. Without the necessary machine tools, you cannot deliver the course and candidates cannot do the practical activity.

Can we change the sizes in the practical activity?

No. Candidates must do the practical activity as published. In addition, you cannot change the layout or the format of the activity.

The only exception to this is regarding the thickness of materials. Where the prescribed thickness is not feasible (typically due to supplier issues), you can change this but you will have to amend the working drawings to take account of this. Please refer to the practical activity documentation for further information.

My candidates don't like the object in the practical activity — can we do something else?

No. The practical activity is a course assessment, in the same way as a question paper or an assignment. The only activity that is valid is the one published annually on our secure website and it is only valid for that academic session.

If you feel that other objects may be more engaging for your candidates, then you can use these as part of your learning and teaching activities.

General

Do we need specific approval to offer this qualification?

Yes. Centres are no longer be auto-approved for the National 5 Practical Woodworking course.

If your centre currently delivers this course (or has done in the past three years), then no approval is required. If your centre has not delivered in the past three years, then subject approval is required and you must have this before delivery begins.

You can find more information on the [National Qualification approval web page](#).

Do candidates need to sit the question paper if doing the National 5 course?

Yes. The question paper is a component of course assessment. We combine the marks from the question paper and the practical activity to determine a grade.

Do we need to provide an estimate grade for all candidates?

Yes. Not only is it a condition of offering the qualification, it is necessary for candidates who may need to make use of our [Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service](#).

If candidates are doing units rather than the course, how long do we need to retain evidence of assessment?

This timescale is unchanged for normal unit entry — you must retain evidence of assessment decisions made until the end of that academic session. However, if you alter unit entries after 28 February, you must retain the assessment evidence until 30 September that calendar year.

Is SQA considering a Higher course in this subject area?

No. At this time, there is only SCQF level 4 (National 4) and SCQF level 5 (National 5). There are currently no plans to develop an SCQF 6 (Higher) qualification in this subject.

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