



# Common questions about National 3, National 4 and National 5 History

## Composition of National 5 Question Paper

In the National 5 History Question Paper, do the source questions (source evaluation, 'how fully' and comparison) only appear in the *Scottish* Unit and not the *British* or *European and World* Units? Therefore, the *British* and *European and World* Units will be knowledge and understanding (KU) based and the 8-mark question will rotate between these two sections?

No. Each section will have a mixture of source and KU-based questions and the 8-mark question will rotate between the three sections.

## Questions on the illustrative/mandatory areas

The illustrative areas are illustrative only, not comprehensive. The illustrative areas should provide an indication of the main ways in which the mandatory content is likely to be interpreted. It was never intended as a syllabus and will never become one.

The questions in the Specimen Question Paper relate to the mandatory content. They follow the principle of only asking about things which, it is reasonable to assume, have been covered — if the topic has been studied to an appropriate level.

The illustrative areas give a guide to the kind of topics which we regard as being unavoidable if you have covered this topic at this level. It is not exhaustive. The level of detail in the Course Assessment Specification is similar to that in the current arrangements documents for the Standard Grade courses which they replace. The level of detail in the illustrative areas is similar to that for the Intermediate courses which National 5 also replaces.

## What is the relationship between the Course assessment and Unit assessments?

Course assessment requires the application of the skills in the Units to the content from the Course Assessment Specification. The four issues in the further mandatory information on course content are mandatory. The exam must be drawn from these four issues.

**In National 5 Unit assessments can a candidate only pass the assessment if they have passed every question? Must all Outcomes be passed in every assessment or does the candidate only have to pass an Outcome once, somewhere across the three Units, wherever they may appear?**

The focus should be on the evidence which learners produce and which Assessment Standards the evidence meets. A single piece of evidence may provide examples of the candidate meeting more than one Assessment Standard. The candidate needs to provide evidence of meeting each Assessment Standard once. The task should prompt the candidate to show their skills.

**Can SQA supply more Unit assessments?**

As Units describe only skills, and have no content, it is not possible to provide exhaustive content examples of Unit assessments. They are flexible so that they can apply to any content. The Unit assessment support packs illustrate possible content. This was drawn from the Course Assessment Specification at National 5 but could have been illustrated using any content.

Teachers must design the Unit assessments to match their learning programmes. The three Unit assessment support packs provide examples of three different approaches to doing this which are easily adaptable to preferred teaching and learning approaches.

In designing or adapting assessment tasks for Units, teachers are encouraged to make them as clear as possible for candidates. If they feel able to express the tasks in a clearer way, they should do so. If this includes numbering the tasks, then they should do so.

The examples in column 4 of the 'Judging evidence' tables in the Unit assessment support packs are illustrations only.

**Can Unit assessments be completed using open book?**

Yes. The Unit assessment support packs state that assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their candidates, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

If the Unit assessment support packs and/or the Evidence Requirements for the Unit do not state specific conditions, then practitioners have the flexibility to decide how the assessment should be conducted.

**Is it correct that candidates only need to pass one of each question type? For example, if they pass a 'How fully ...' question in an assessment on Wallace/Bruce it is not necessary for them to pass it in Changing Britain or the Russian Revolution?**

Yes, a single piece of evidence for each Assessment Standard is required, so passing a 'how fully' question on Russia means it is passed.

**Does each Outcome have to be sampled just once across the whole Course? Or, if a candidate passes a knowledge Outcome in Scottish, do they still need to separately pass a knowledge Outcome in British and European?**

Evidence for each Assessment Standard must be provided once. This can be generated in any form which allows the candidate to show their ability.

**For the Outcome in the British and European/World Units which requires candidates to select information from a source, can we select any source? Does it need to be unseen previously by candidates (ie, not in any textbooks we use)?**

A piece of historical information means any piece of information about historical events. It could be a textbook. It does not need to be unseen.

**The guidance for National 5 Unit assessment ‘how useful’ questions requires candidates to give at least three points — from origin and purpose and/or content and/or context. Does this mean that candidates can give any three points from these, or that the responses must include both origin and purpose and/or one other?**

Candidates can give at least three points from any of these — origin, purpose, content, context.

**In Assessment Standard 2.3 of National 5 Scottish (Unit-by-Unit approach), what needs to be done in order for candidates to achieve a pass?**

To meet the Assessment Standard, candidates must identify different aspects of the issue and how they are connected. For example, in answer to the question ‘to what extent political life in Scotland was changed by the First World War?’ they may talk about votes for women, votes for men, voting behaviour, political parties, etc. They could comment on the relative extent of change between these factors, eg ‘the war had a bigger impact on women than it did on men as there was a bigger increase in the number of women who could vote’, or they could take different aspects of one factor, eg ‘while it had a big impact on women over 30 who could now vote, younger women saw no real political gains from the war’.

**In Assessment Standard 2.2 of National 5 Scottish (Unit-by-Unit approach), do candidates simply need two points from either source content (from other aspects of the assessment) or recall?**

As there are no restrictions on the time or resources which candidates can use, they can use any points of content whatsoever. The critical skill is to show how the points connect, eg this event happened because of this, or this event led to that event. Recall is not a feature of Unit assessment. That is part of the added value of the exam in the Course assessment.

**We have based our Unit assessment for the Atlantic Slave Trade on the British example given on SQA’s secure site. The mode of**

**assessment has changed from a visual product to questions but the same prompts remain. Is this acceptable?**

Yes, this is acceptable.

**Using the ‘Judging evidence’ table Outcomes 1.1 and 1.2, we plan to get candidates to compare two conflicting sources. Is this acceptable?**

Yes, this is acceptable. This is too much for these Assessment Standards, and it does not need to be a primary source. Our advice would be that you should combine the two sources (you will need to cut down the word-count and insert a sentence to connect the two views) and then candidates would just need to provide information about the treatment of slaves.

**The assessment we sent for verification assessed all the Outcomes and covered all criteria, but was only on railways. If we do this as an end-of-Unit assessment will it count for British or just the railways? Do we now have to do separate assessments for Political Reform, Health and Housing and Industry, ie do we have to create another three assessments for candidates to have passed the British Unit, or is a pass with the railways assessment enough?**

Assuming the assessment task on the railways covers all of the Assessment Standards/Outcomes, then candidates would not need to do separate assessments — they have done enough to ‘pass the British Unit’. This is because the Unit only requires a British context, not any specific content, nor yet a range of content; one area of content will suffice for each Unit.

**When gathering evidence from activities within our teaching and learning/portfolio approach, can we keep photocopies of candidates’ work as evidence of must it be the original work?**

Yes, it is acceptable to keep photocopies of candidates’ work as evidence.

**What is the purpose of the assignment resource sheet? At Intermediate 2 and Higher it is a planning sheet and candidates use it to help structure their essay in terms of the content of each paragraph etc. Can this still be the case?**

It is different. The purpose of the History resource sheet is for candidates to write down evidence and references. It is not (as for Intermediate 2 and Higher) to help them structure their essay in terms of the content/paragraphs. Candidates should refer to the resource sheet as they write their reports. The markers will also use it in this way — it isn’t marked but it will help markers gain an insight into what the candidate intended. It is not what they put on the sheet but how they use it that will attract marks).

General Curriculum for Excellence questions and answers can be found on the [frequently asked questions section](#) of SQA’s website.