

# Equality Review Summary



<b>Qualification</b>	Biology
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<b>Level</b>	National 5
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## REVIEW OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS EQUALITY REVIEW

<b>Date of review</b>	30/06/2017
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### Coursework and/ or Question Paper revisions

Practical/experimental/field work has become a mandatory feature of the assignment following the removal of the units which currently assess this.

The question paper is being extended to ensure it samples a greater amount of course content following the removal of the units.

Some content from the course is being removed as a result of feedback from stakeholders who indicated that course content was excessive.

The assignment will be scaled to maintain the current 20%:80% course assessment weighting.

### Equality & inclusion issues

No changes have been made to the aims, rationale or content of the course. Only the Course assessment have changed as outlined above. This means that the original equality review carried out and attached remains valid and fit for purpose. It should be noted however, that the Units, which were a feature of the original ERF, have now been removed.

#### Introduction of new Coursework

There are no other implications other than that which had been previously recorded for practical work on the original ERF.

#### Extension of existing question paper

##### Disability

Some disabled candidates who require extra time may find increased focus on externally assessed exams more challenging and they may experience fatigue over the longer examination time. For example, candidates with physical disabilities may have difficulties in maintaining stamina or those unable to concentrate for extended periods may have difficulties in maintaining focus and have difficulties in demonstrating their attainment. Other disabled candidates such as those with mental health difficulties or emotional behavioural difficulties may find the longer examination experience overly stressful leading to increased anxiety which could negatively impact on their ability to demonstrate their attainment.

##### Religion and belief

Some candidates because of religion and belief may experience a higher level of fatigue and be adversely affected in an extended question paper because they are fasting, for example this could impact on Muslim candidates who fast during Ramadan.

**Actions that will mitigate any adverse impact outlined above**

**Introduction of new Coursework**

The development of practical skills is among the stated aims of these Courses and progression to more advanced qualifications could be compromised if practical abilities were not developed. Practical skills were previously assessed in the Units.

The provision of appropriate assessment arrangements such as the use a practical assistant, and other supportive practices will mitigate the adverse impact for many candidates. SQA will also continue to ensure that individual requests for reasonable adjustments are considered where appropriate. However, while it may not be possible to exempt disabled learners from the assessment of practical activities in the Assignment, it may be possible to consider exemption from some aspects of the practical activities.

**Extension of existing question paper**

While it is not possible to exempt disabled learners from the external QP at National 5 where this is an integral assessment component, the provision of appropriate assessment arrangements and other supportive practices will mitigate the adverse impact for many disabled candidates. For example, by the careful consideration of the amount of extra time being requested and by further consideration being given as to whether there are any other more appropriate assessment arrangements such as using ICT and/or assistive technologies or the inclusion of rest breaks.

SQA recognises that reasonable adjustments or assessment arrangements may be incapable of mitigating all of these potential negative impacts entirely. Nevertheless, the decision to extend the existing question has been taken to ensure that the standards, quality and credibility of the National Qualifications are maintained.

It is not possible for SQA to take all possible religious festivals and periods of observance into account when constructing the exam timetable. SQA will take into account, through its exceptional circumstances process, any negative impact such as a candidate being unwell caused by fasting during an examination.

**ORIGINAL NATIONAL QUALIFICATION DEVELOPMENT EQUALITY REVIEW**

<b>Date of review</b>	29/06/2012
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**Summary of Conclusion and recommendation**

The adverse impact of the potential barriers identified for disabled learners can be mitigated by the provision of appropriate assessment arrangements. However, it should be noted that it may not be possible to exempt a disabled learner from components of assessment where this would compromise the integrity of the qualification.

The adverse impact of the potential barriers identified for learners on grounds of Religion and/or Belief can be mitigated by the expectation that teachers/lecturers delivering the content and skills of the National 5 courses in Biology would do so in a sensitive and respectful manner with emphasis on the scientific processes. It is also expected that questions in the externally set question paper would be sensitively worded.