

College edition

Your

National

Qualifications



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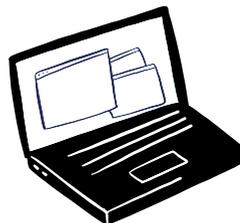
# Your National Qualifications 2023–24

This booklet tells you what you need to do when completing your coursework for National Qualifications. It also has useful information about how to prepare for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher exams.

Your lecturers can also explain all of this to you.

You might want to show this booklet to your parents or carers to help keep them up to date.

Throughout this booklet we use the term **‘coursework’** to mean any written or practical assessments (not including exams) you do for your National Qualifications. This may include portfolios, practical activities, performances, assignments or projects, depending on the subjects you’re doing.



# What are National Qualifications?



National Qualifications are mainly taken by learners in secondary schools, colleges and some types of training providers in Scotland. You will probably be studying for some of the following National Qualifications.

## **National 1 units and National 2 to National 4 courses**

These are assessed as 'pass' or 'fail' by your lecturer. They involve unit assessments that you will complete throughout the year. These assess particular skills, knowledge and understanding at stages of the course.

National 4 courses include an added value unit assessment that you complete towards the end of the year. This is usually an assignment or a test that assesses the skills, knowledge and understanding that you have developed throughout the whole course.

## **National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses**

These typically involve coursework and end-of-year exams. They are marked by us, and graded A to D.

## **Skills for Work courses**

These focus on the general skills that are needed in the workplace and are usually assessed by your lecturer through practical activities.

## **Awards**

These are a set of related units that are often projects and assignments that are assessed as either 'pass' or 'fail'.



# Assessment arrangements

If you need support because of a disability or additional support need, your college or training provider can make arrangements to give you an equal chance to show what you know, understand and can do.

Assessment arrangements can be put in place for coursework and performances, as well as for exams.

If you need assessment arrangements and would like to know more about the ones that might be appropriate for you, it is important that you speak to your lecturer as soon as possible. If you prefer, your parent or carer can speak to your lecturer for you.

There are different types of assessment arrangements which may vary by subject, level and learner. These include adapted question papers and changes to the assessment environment and timing.

More information is available at:

**[www.sqa.org.uk/learnerassessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/learnerassessmentarrangements)**

**‘Assessment arrangements’** are adjustments that can be made to enable learners who are disabled or have additional support needs to demonstrate the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding of the course.

# Modifications

Most courses have now returned to full assessment, as it was before the modifications that were in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes reinstating coursework and parts of exams that were temporarily removed.

Coursework is something that many learners enjoy and do well in, and it allows them to show what they can do in practice beyond exams.

We are keeping modifications to assessments in a small number of courses where we saw evidence that they had a positive effect on learners. For example, in some courses, reducing the volume of work that learners needed to produce or giving them more opportunities for personalisation and choice had a positive effect on learners.

You can see how your course will be assessed, including any modifications that are staying in place, on our website at **[www.sqa.org.uk/nqassessment2024](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqassessment2024)**

Your lecturer can also give you more information about how your courses will be assessed.

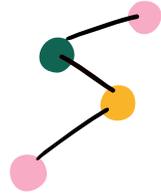


# Types of coursework

Your National Qualification can be made up of different types of coursework, including portfolios, practical activities, performances, assignments and projects. The type of coursework you do will depend on the course you are studying.



Coursework gives you the chance to show that you know your subject and to gain marks that could make a difference to your final grade. Each piece of coursework will have different requirements. Your lecturer will tell you about these.



There are rules that you must follow and information you need to know about your coursework. It is important that you understand the rules because they are there to make sure that coursework assessments are fair to everyone.



If you do not understand the rules, speak to your lecturer. They can also tell you what could happen if you break the rules.



You will find lots of useful information at [www.sqa.org.uk/learners](http://www.sqa.org.uk/learners)

# Doing your coursework



## Sources

You may be able to use lots of different sources, including books, the internet and TV, in your work. Using different sources is a great way to learn. However, it is important that you make it clear where information has come from.

You can't just copy information from other sources and include it as if it were your own work. You must keep a note of all material you use from other sources so that it is clear which work is not your own. Your lecturer can tell you how to do this, but here are a few pointers.

- Use 'quotation marks' around any text that has come from other sources, and clearly identify where that text comes from.
- Provide a reference for any diagrams or illustrations you've used from other sources.
- Create a bibliography (a list of sources you have used) if you need one. This will go at the end of your work.



# Artificial Intelligence

There are several artificial intelligence tools (AI tools) such as ChatGPT or Google Bard that can generate human-like text and other outputs including images and audio. Many of these AI tools have age restrictions, so they are not suitable for everyone, and the text they produce can be incorrect or contain biased information. As the information is not reliable, **you must not use or reference AI tools as sources for your coursework.** References to AI tools as a source will not receive any marks.

You can speak to your lecturer to find out more about sources you can use for your coursework and to prepare for exams.



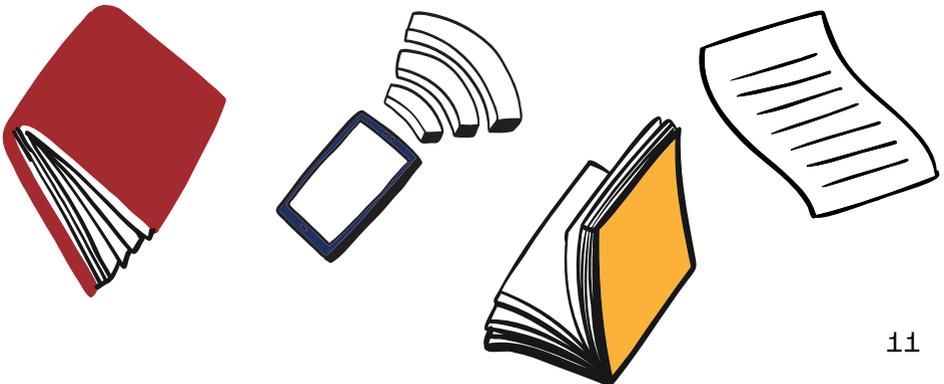
# Plagiarism

You must not hand in work that is not your own. Passing off other people's work and ideas (or work produced by AI tools) as your own is called 'plagiarism' and it's cheating.

If you don't reference sources, as explained on page 9, that's also plagiarism.

It's not your own work if:

- all or some of it has been produced, or worked on, by someone else
- it has been done by someone who has produced similar work in the past
- it is example work that has been prepared by your lecturer
- you've copied it from a book, website or an essay bank, or
- you have copied work that has been produced by an AI tool and are passing it off as your own work.



# Collusion

Working with others when you should be working alone is called 'collusion'. This applies to giving help, getting help, and sharing files, passwords and paperwork.

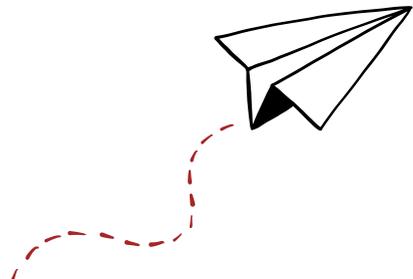


Everyone involved in collusion is breaking the rules – not just the person who has asked for help. If another learner (for example, someone in your class) asks you for help, you should tell them to speak to the lecturer.



If you are working as part of a group (for example, a group project), you must make sure that the written work you provide as part of the group work is your own.

If you are having difficulty with any part of your course, ask your lecturer for advice. No other person can be involved, at any stage, in discussing or reviewing your coursework.



# Don't risk it

Spotting plagiarism and collusion isn't difficult.

- Lecturers are familiar with your work and can spot changes in your writing style and the language you use.
- Markers know their subject very well, so they're familiar with lots of sources.
- We use software that identifies plagiarism and collusion. This software matches copied phrases and text with the sources they've been taken from. The software also helps to identify work produced by AI tools.



## Language and writing

Do not include rude, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or images in your work. If you do, markers will investigate.

Remember that written coursework must be legible. Markers will do their best to read your work, but they might not be able to award marks if your writing is too difficult to read.

## Word count

If your coursework states a minimum or maximum word count, you must stick to it – you might be penalised if you don't.



## Resource sheets

In certain subjects you may be allowed to use resource sheets. Your lecturer will tell you if you need to use a resource sheet (also known as 'research sheets' or 'processed information sheets') as part of your coursework, and will show you how to use it. If you are not sure whether you will need to use a resource sheet, speak to your lecturer.

If you do need to use a resource sheet, it's really important that you know the rules on how to use it because you could lose marks if you do not use it correctly.

You must hand in your resource sheet with your coursework. If you don't, you will automatically lose 20% of the marks for your coursework.

See '**What if I break the rules?**' on page 19 for more information.



# Handing in your coursework

## Check your work

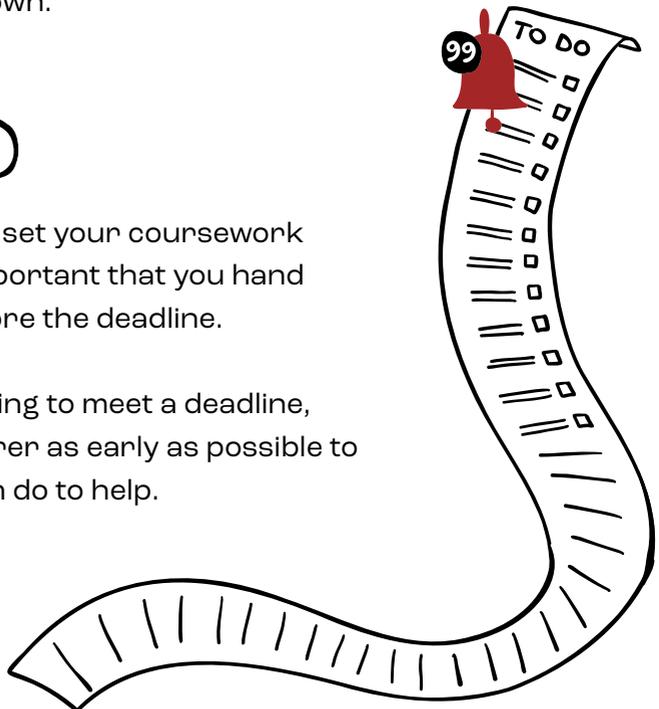
Before you hand in your coursework, you must look over it and check that:

- everything is your own work, and you have properly referenced all sources of information, diagrams or illustrations you have used
- there is no rude, abusive or offensive language or images
- you have completed your coursework in line with the instructions your lecturer gave you, and
- you have not created work using an AI tool and passed it off as your own.

## Deadlines

Your lecturer will set your coursework deadlines. It is important that you hand your work in before the deadline.

If you are struggling to meet a deadline, talk to your lecturer as early as possible to see what they can do to help.



# Declaration

Before your college or training provider sends your coursework to us for marking, they will give you a declaration to sign. It's really important that you understand the declaration. If you're not sure about anything, ask your lecturer.

This is the declaration you'll need to sign.



I confirm that:

- I have read SQA's Your National Qualifications booklet and understand its contents.
- I understand that SQA may reduce or cancel my grades where I have not followed the rules specified in the Your National Qualifications booklet.
- the coursework submitted with this declaration is all my own work with all sources of information clearly identified and acknowledged.
- where I have used a resource sheet, I have submitted it along with my coursework.
- I understand that this coursework will be submitted to SQA for marking.

Note: if you plan to publish or share your work online, you must discuss this with your college.

**What if  
I break  
the rules?**



If an investigation finds you've broken any rules, there may be a penalty, which could include the following.

- Your marks can be reduced, or you can be awarded zero marks.
- Your qualification for that subject can be cancelled.
- All of your qualifications for the entire year can be cancelled.

## **Remember**



### **You must:**

- do all the work yourself
- properly reference all sources
- check your work before handing it in
- hand your work in on time, and
- hand in any resource sheet you have used.

### **You must not:**

- copy someone else's work
- collude with someone else
- use artificial intelligence to create your work, or
- use rude, abusive or offensive words or images.

# Questions we are often asked about exams...



## What are prelims?

Prelim is short for 'preliminary exam'. Most colleges choose to run prelims to help learners practise for their exams, to give them feedback on their performance, and to help identify how well each learner is progressing with the course.

Your college or training provider will decide if and when they will run prelims this year.



## Does SQA mark the prelims?

The question papers you sit during prelims are created by your college or training provider, and are marked by your lecturers.



## Who will mark my coursework and exams?

We will mark all National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher exams, and we will also mark most of the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher coursework. Some coursework is assessed by your lecturer, and we carry out quality checks to make sure they are marking in line with the national standard.



## When will I get my results?

You will get your exam results by post on **Tuesday 6 August 2024**. We also send your results to your college or training provider. If you have applied to a university or college through UCAS (the University and College Admissions Service), they will also receive your results.

If you don't receive your certificate by post on results day, contact your college or training provider. They can tell you your results and will work with us to find out what has happened to your certificate.



## What is MySQA?

MySQA is your direct link with us. It holds your qualification information and personal details and, if you're sitting exams, you can get your results early by email or text. Sign up at **[www.mysqa.org.uk](http://www.mysqa.org.uk)**



## I have two exams at the same time or one immediately after the other on the same day. What should I do?

The first thing to do is speak to your college or training provider. They will be able to look at possible alternative arrangements.

# Your 2024 exams

View the exam timetable at [www.sqa.org.uk/timetable](http://www.sqa.org.uk/timetable).

This shows the dates and times of your exams.

You can also download our MyExams app to create and view your personal timetable, add notes, and add your personal timetable to other calendars.

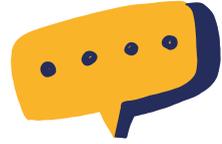
The 2024 exams will take place from **22 April to 30 May**.

We'll give you another booklet, 'Your Exams', in March. This will tell you more about what will happen in the exams and what you'll need to do.



# Support and information

You will receive the 'Your Exams' booklet by the end of March 2024. This will provide more information on assessment, and you can stay up to date on the latest information at:



**[www.sqa.org.uk/learners](http://www.sqa.org.uk/learners)**



**[www.sqa.org.uk/nq24](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nq24)**

For support, including links to organisations who you can speak to if you are feeling anxious, visit:



**[www.sqa.org.uk/learnerssupport](http://www.sqa.org.uk/learnerssupport)**

# Got a question?

0345 279 1000

[www.sqa.org.uk/learners](http://www.sqa.org.uk/learners)



## We want to hear from you

SQA is currently researching the 2023 approach to National Qualifications assessment. It is important for us to understand how the system worked in practice, and to hear your views. If you sat National Qualifications exams in 2023, scan the QR code to take part.

