



# Common questions about Engineering Science

## National 5 and Higher assignments

### **The assignment changes each year — what happens if candidates do the wrong one?**

Candidates must complete the current assignment to gain marks. It is only available on our secure website, and it clearly shows which session it is for.

### **Can assignment work be reviewed or provisionally marked?**

No. Once assignments are complete or when the 8-hour time limit has passed, you must collect them in and prepare them for submission to SQA for external assessment.

### **What happens if a candidate doesn't finish within the 8-hour time limit?**

Candidates are not allowed any additional time. The assignment has a fixed duration, like the question paper. If a candidate does not finish in the time available, you must submit the work they have completed, and a mark is awarded as part of our external assessment activity.

### **Can candidates work as a group when doing the assignment?**

No. Candidates must complete the assignment on an individual basis — no group work is allowed. The assignment must be conducted under a high degree of supervision and control, to ensure that the work presented is the candidate's own.

### **Can I just print out the assignment and hand it to the candidates to do?**

No. The assignment includes instructions for teachers, lecturers and candidates, which can vary each year. They include an introduction to the assignment and information on preparing candidates before they begin.

## **Can teachers, lecturers or candidates discuss the assignment on forums or secure groups?**

No. The assignment is a secure assessment, and the mark contributes to a candidate's overall grade. It is only available on our secure website and must not be shared or discussed on other forums, including social media. The assignment must remain secure until SQA removes it from the secure site.

## **Is it possible to deliver some content, have the candidate do part of the assignment, deliver more content and then have the candidate complete the assignment?**

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

## **Candidates have 8 hours to complete the assignment — does this mean that they have to do it all at once?**

No. Candidates must complete the assignment over a consecutive period of 8 hours.

For example, if a candidate had Engineering Science on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, they would begin on Monday and then stop to attend their other classes. They would continue on Wednesday, stopping again, before finishing on Friday.

You must ensure that candidates' work remains secure until they complete the assignment.

## **The assignment must be conducted under a high degree of supervision and control — does this mean that we need invigilators?**

No. Teachers and lecturers can supervise. You can find the '[Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#)' document on the subject level pages of SQA's website.

## **Can we use the assignment mark from last session for a resit candidate?**

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

## **If we are delivering the course over two years, when do we give candidates the assignment?**

Candidates must do the assignment from the same academic session as the question paper that they are sitting. They must start the assignment at an appropriate point in the course, once all content has been delivered (which would not be in the first year of a two-year delivery).

## **Our centre does not have enough components for all candidates to work on this part of the assignment at the same time — what should we do?**

If you have a limited number of components and opt to use construction rather than simulation, you need to plan carefully. You need to manage the class so that each candidate has the time and resources to do this part of the assignment on their own.

One solution is to stagger access to the components over several days. Alternatively, you might find simulation, rather than construction, more appropriate in situations like this.

## **Can we alter the assignment by changing images or changing the layout?**

No. Candidates must do the assignment as published by SQA. You cannot change it in any way or present it to candidates in a different format.

## **What should we do if a candidate needs additional support or has an assessment need?**

You should contact the [Assessment Arrangements Team](#) to discuss the needs of the candidate and potential arrangements that can be made. We deal with every request on an individual basis to ensure equity for all candidates and that the most appropriate arrangement is in place.

## **Is there a recommended software package appropriate to use as a pneumatics, electronics or structures simulation?**

No. We do not approve, recommend or comment on the validity of any specific software packages used in National Courses. You must ensure that any software package used for learning, teaching or assessment purposes meets the requirements of the course.

## **Simulation software can be expensive — can SQA suggest where we can find it cheaply?**

No. It is for you to decide the most appropriate software to deliver National Courses and to identify a suitable supplier.

## **Our simulation software is web-based, so we cannot use it without internet access — how can our candidates do the assignment?**

The assessment conditions are in the course specification and are expanded upon in the assignment document. You must adhere to these conditions to ensure equity for all candidates.

We acknowledge that some centres may have web-based software, networks that cannot be restricted, or something similar. In such cases, you must do your best (relative to the situation) to meet the assessment conditions. For example, you may be able to limit internet access for running web-based simulation software.

If internet access cannot be restricted, you must ensure that candidates are not using the internet to help them do their assignment.

### **We are having major problems with our simulation software and don't have physical components to use in its place — what should we do?**

Escalate this within your centre as a matter of urgency. Without the necessary software, you cannot deliver the course and candidates cannot do the assignment.

## **General**

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

The timescale is unchanged — unit evidence must be retained until the end of the academic session in which the assessment decisions were made. However, if unit entries are altered after 28 February (for example a change of level, change of result, or new unit entry), you must retain the assessment evidence until 30 September in the same calendar year.

### **Will candidates have to write code as a question paper response?**

No. However, they may be asked to identify or describe a fault in code, or to troubleshoot and correct errors in code.

You will find general questions and answers about National Qualifications on our website at [www.sqa.org.uk/faq](http://www.sqa.org.uk/faq)