



Common questions about National 3, National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher English

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Changes for session 2024–25

The questions in this section refer to the changes made to course and unit assessment requirements from session 2024–25 onwards.

What are the changes to National 3 and National 4 English for session 2024–25 onwards?

There are no changes to the National 3 English course. It returned to full assessment requirements from session 2023–24.

Based on feedback from the teaching profession, and as part of our ongoing review and maintenance of National Courses, we have changed the requirements of the National 4 English added value unit from session 2024–25. You can find more information on this on the [National 4 English web page](#). We have published exemplification and the recording of a webinar from September. These support materials are available on the [Understanding Standards](#) section of the website.

We recently reviewed and removed [Specification 3](#) for National Literacy units. This means that there are no longer restrictions on the assessment arrangements available to candidates for the National 3 and 4 Literacy units. Candidates can now use a human reader or a human scribe for the reading and writing assessments if they are eligible for them. It is also now possible to be exempted from one of the four assessed skills as a measure of last resort. For advice on any of these assessment arrangements please contact our assessment arrangements teams at aarequests@sqa.org.uk. Information on assessment arrangements is available on the [assessment arrangements web page](#).

What are the changes to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher English for session 2024–25 onwards?

We're tightening the conditions of assessment in National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher English portfolio-writing from session 2024–25. You can find information on the [National 5](#), [Higher](#) and [Advanced Higher](#) English web pages.

Note: these changes do not apply to the Advanced Higher project–dissertation, which has no changes to the conditions of assessment.

Course assessment

What is SQA's position on the use of artificial intelligence?

Our current position on the use of generative artificial intelligence in session 2024–25 has been developed to ensure equity and fairness for all candidates studying our qualifications. You can find more information on the [Generative artificial intelligence \(AI\) in assessments web page](#).

What advice is given about preparing candidates for the final question in the National 5 and Higher Scottish texts section in the Critical Reading question papers?

You can find advice in the National 5 and Higher English course specifications, in the course support notes in the appendix of the course specifications, and in the course reports. There is exemplification, together with marking commentaries, on [SQA's Understanding Standards website](#) as well as an [audio presentation](#).

Candidates should revise overarching central concerns/themes when preparing a play, novel, collection of short stories or poems for the final question in the Scottish text section.

When candidates are studying the texts, they should be on the lookout for connections between short stories and poems, or between parts of a longer text. These connections may take the form of central concerns or themes, or may be aspects of a writer's techniques, for example characterisation, setting, word choice or imagery.

While preparing for the final question in this section, candidates must be aware that they must make a connection between the printed extract or poem, and at least one other poem or short story or part of a larger work. They must show how this connection operates in the printed extract, and elsewhere. To do this effectively, candidates have to make detailed references and conduct precise analysis on these references. Candidates should be aware that it is not essential to quote when making these connections: relevant references are just as valid.

In their responses, candidates should answer with clear relevance, addressing all aspects included in the question. For example, if a question asks how a relationship is used to explore central concerns, the answer must go beyond describing the relationship to exploring how the relationship is linked to central concerns (for example main themes, ideas).

Do candidates have to provide quotations in their answers to the final question of the Scottish texts section?

Direct quotations and references to text are both appropriate and acceptable here. The following advice is in the [Higher English Course Specification](#) in the course support notes:

In candidates' responses for the Critical Reading question paper, they have to make reference to the texts they have studied. A reference does not have to take the form of a quotation. A reference might be:

- ◆ a summary of what a character in a play, novel or short story has said
- ◆ a summary of a significant event or a moment
- ◆ an aspect of conflict
- ◆ a description of aspects of setting, or comments on characterisation, for example a character's mental state or feelings

The 2024 Higher course report provides the following guidance for this question.

In the final 6 marks, candidates should be aware that quotations are not needed. Learning a series of quotations and attempting to 'fit' these to the question is not beneficial to candidates. An approach based heavily on quotes learned may lack relevance to the question. References are just as valid as quotations, especially with longer texts. Using very short quotations, including one-word quotations, is unlikely to provide enough material to answer this part of the question well. For poetry answers, learning quotations from other poems can be a starting point, but the comments are where candidates can gain marks. Developing a broad understanding of the wider work or works is a more useful approach in preparation for this part of the question.

What support materials are available?

[SQA's Understanding Standards website](#) has candidate evidence, across a range of marks, and accompanying commentaries for all English components at all levels. It has some [audio presentations](#) and also includes a [summary of recently posted material](#). You can use this to benchmark against and to help understand how marks are awarded.

Past papers and associated marking instructions are available from SQA's [past papers web page](#). An additional resource, in the form of SQA question papers from 2020–21, are available on the [National 5](#), [Higher](#) and [Advanced Higher](#) English web pages and can be used by centres in the same way as past papers.

If we decide to study poetry, do we have to study all of the set poems?

Each author on the set text list of Scottish writers at National 5 and Higher has to be read in its entire specification. If you choose to study poetry, you must study all six poems. Candidates will not know which poem or extract will be the focus of the question (nor which others might be relevant to the subject of the final question), so could only meet this requirement by knowing all of the texts.

Must candidates only refer to poems or short stories from the current list when responding to the final question of the Scottish Set texts section?

Yes, candidates must construct their responses to the final question of the Scottish texts section using the current list. Centres should prepare candidates using the current set text list.

In January 2017, SQA published the refreshed Scottish set text list for National 5 and Higher English, for use in session 2018–19 onwards. Publication of the refreshed list followed a period of consultation with teachers, lecturers, and other relevant bodies. A copy of this list is available on the [English subject page](#).

We are currently working on a refreshed list for use in session 2025–26.

Teachers and lecturers still have freedom to select texts for the critical essay section, meaning candidates study a range of literature at National 5 and Higher English.

Are candidates permitted to refer to the remainder of an extracted poem or short story for the final question of the Scottish texts section?

Essentially, the final questions of the Scottish texts section in both National 5 and Higher assess candidates' skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to the area of Scottish literature that they have studied (be it a play, novel, or series of short stories or poems). Here is an example from National 5 (2018), of a final question on Donovan:

By referring to this extract and to at least one other story by Donovan, show how important relationships are explored.

The question asks candidates to refer to and to consider the printed extract, and then to apply their knowledge of the other Donovan stories. Short stories operate in the same way as poems in the final question — candidates deal with the printed extract, and with at least one of the other poems or short stories.

Once candidates have dealt with the extract, they should be looking to at least one of the other three short stories, not to the remainder of the story from which the extract is taken.

How many poems or short stories have to be compared for the National 5 or Higher Scottish texts section final question?

The requirement is to refer to at least one other poem or short story — so it can be one or two, or more.

I am using an old edition of the play *Tally's Blood* for National 5 English. The new edition is slightly different. Does this matter?

No. There is a new edition of the play that is different in that act 2, scene 5 was removed from the text in the Hodder Gibson publication. This was at the request of the author. In light of this, SQA does not use the original act 2, scene 5 as an extract for the question paper. It is, of course, perfectly acceptable for a candidate to make reference to this scene as part of an answer to the final question in the textual analysis if they have studied an earlier edition.

There are variations in some of the published editions of works from the Scottish set text list. Does SQA recommend certain editions?

SQA is aware of these variations. In an acknowledgement that English departments may possess a number of different editions, SQA does not recommend specific editions. However, SQA takes extracts from the most up-to-date versions of the text, where possible. This allows for cases (such as the one above) where a writer decides to revise a text. Marking will not disadvantage candidates who have studied a different edition from that printed in the question paper. There is information about the specific editions on the final page of the Critical Reading question paper under 'Acknowledgement of copyright'.

For Higher English, can a candidate answer on a prose set text (for example *Jekyll and Hyde*) and then choose a critical essay question from the prose non-fiction section?

No. A candidate who answers on a text in the prose section of Scottish texts section cannot then choose an essay question from either the prose or prose non-fiction sections. This is made clear in the question paper where it states for each prose text: 'If you choose this text you may not attempt a question on prose (fiction or non-fiction) in section 2.'

Does SQA offer advice about text selection for critical essay?

Yes, SQA has added new advice and guidance on text selection to the course support notes section of the course specifications for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher English. This includes advice on addressing issues of diversity.

Teachers and lecturers have complete freedom to select texts for the critical essay section, meaning candidates study a range of literature at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher English.

Can a candidate submit more than one poem, if they are submitting poetry for the portfolio (National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher)?

For poetry, a single poem is treated in exactly the same way as any other piece of writing: one piece is required. It is acceptable to submit a group of related short poems, but these are treated as one piece and marked as such. It is not necessary or desirable to provide any introductory explanation to the poem or poems submitted. The length should be appropriate to purpose; however, brevity is expected given the concentration of language that is characteristic of poetry.

Can a candidate submit the same portfolio as the previous year for external assessment?

A candidate could use a previous folio submission as a starting point or stimulus, but they must rework it. It is not possible to submit the exact same coursework. This is the same policy for all subjects with coursework.

It is important to note that there are distinct differences in terms of challenge, difficulty and marking criteria between SCQF levels. A candidate's coursework is assessed against the marking instructions for the level that they are being presented for.

Where can I find the templates for the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher portfolio–writing, and the Advanced Higher project–dissertation?

You can find the templates and submission instructions on the [English subject pages](#) for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher under the 'Coursework' tab.

Which genre of writing should be covered in the Advanced Higher portfolio–writing?

For the Advanced Higher portfolio–writing, candidates have to produce one piece of writing from the following genres: persuasive, informative, argumentative, reflective, poetry, prose fiction, or drama.

What is the word count for the project–dissertation?

The word count for the dissertation must be between 2,500 and 3,500 words.

How many texts should be covered for the Advanced Higher project–dissertation and Literary Study question paper?

For the Literary Study question paper, the course specification gives the following advice.

This question paper requires candidates to make connections and/or comparisons across texts. The required number of texts is specified in each question:

- ◆ poetry: three poems
- ◆ prose fiction: two novels or three short stories
- ◆ prose non-fiction: at least two non-fiction texts
- ◆ drama: two plays

For literary study, please refer to [published past papers](#).

For the project–dissertation, the course specification offers these suggestions:

- ◆ two texts by the same novelist
- ◆ two texts written by different novelists
- ◆ a single, substantial text
- ◆ two texts by the same dramatist
- ◆ texts written by two or more dramatists
- ◆ a wide range (perhaps seven or more) of poems by one poet
- ◆ a narrow range (six or fewer) of poems by one poet
- ◆ texts written by two or more poets
- ◆ short stories (three or more)
- ◆ literary non-fiction

Can candidates study a text for the project–dissertation by a writer they have studied in class for the Literary Study question paper?

No. Candidates cannot use writers or texts studied for the Literary Study question paper in their project–dissertation. Due to the focus on independent learning in Advanced Higher courses, and the coursework tasks in particular, writers and/or texts studied for the project–dissertation cannot be taught.

Are there any genre restrictions in the Advanced Higher English course?

Advanced Higher is an opportunity for candidates to specialise and, as a result, there are no genre restrictions. For example, it is possible for a candidate to answer a question from the poetry section in both the Literary Study and Textual Analysis question papers as well as submitting a dissertation on a group of poems.

Can candidates use media or language texts for the project–dissertation?

No, candidates cannot use media or language texts for their dissertations. The focus of Advanced Higher English is on literary texts.

Can candidates use dictionaries during the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher English exams?

No, candidates cannot use dictionaries during any of the English exams.

National 5 and Higher English: performance–spoken language

Is it a compulsory requirement that all candidates complete the performance–spoken language?

The performance–spoken language is a mandatory part of the National 5 and Higher English courses. All candidates must successfully complete this component to achieve the course award at either National 5 or Higher.

Where do I find details about the performance–spoken language?

Please refer to both the course specification, which has detailed marking instructions, and the coursework assessment task, which includes the assessment checklist. You can download these documents from the [National 5](#) and [Higher English](#) subject pages.

Is there any exemplification of the standards required?

Yes. Video footage of candidates undertaking both individual presentations and group discussions, with accompanying checklists and commentaries at National 5 and Higher are available on [SQA's Understanding Standards website](#).

To access material for the performance–spoken language, go to the [Understanding Standards homepage](#).

Click the 'Login' link at the top right of the page, and log in using the details which have been shared with SQA co-ordinators.

If successful, it will have 'You are logged in as: [english]' in the top right-hand corner of the web page.

Then navigate to the English National 5 or Higher page where you will find the performance–spoken language menu.

Is evidence gathered for the performance–spoken language subject to verification?

Yes. Verification is carried out on a sample basis, as is the case for all internally assessed course components.

What evidence do I need to gather and/or retain?

A detailed checklist is required and can be supplemented by a video recording of candidate performance. A video recording may be useful for internal moderation and/or staff development and is acceptable for verification in addition to a detailed checklist.

How much detail should the performance–spoken language checklist contain?

The checklist must contain comments on all four aspects of a candidate's performance. It should include some examples of the candidate's spoken language and indicate how the assessor has arrived at the assessment judgements.

Examples of appropriately detailed checklists are available on our [Understanding Standards website](#). Your SQA co-ordinator can provide login details to view these materials.

Do we have to use SQA's performance–spoken language checklist?

No. SQA has produced a checklist which covers all mandatory aspects of assessment for the performance–spoken language. If you wish to create your own checklist you must ensure that it covers all four aspects of assessment.

Would evidence gathered for the performance–spoken language also meet the requirements for the National 5 Literacy freestanding unit?

It is highly likely that evidence gathered for the performance–spoken language will also meet the assessment standards for outcome 4 (talking) within the freestanding Literacy unit at SCQF level 5. However, assessment of listening in Literacy is analysis-based and would have to be treated separately.

Is there a minimum amount of time that candidates' presentations or group discussions should last for?

There is no specified time requirement. Teachers and lecturers should give candidates enough scope to produce detailed spoken language and to achieve all four aspects of assessment.

Do candidates need to achieve all four aspects of the performance–spoken language at one time?

No, assessment can be holistic, and evidence can be gathered naturally over several occasions. Assessment should take place at an appropriate time when candidates have acquired all of the necessary skills.

Do all candidates have to deliver a presentation?

You have the freedom to decide which approach to assessment best suits your candidates. Presentations and discussions are equally acceptable.

Is there a minimum number of participants required for group discussion?

Group composition may vary to suit the needs of all candidates. It may be appropriate to vary group numbers according to need. A group discussion is defined as a discussion involving the candidate and at least one other person; the other person could be the teacher or lecturer.

Can the performance–spoken language be approached in a cross-curricular way?

Content for the performance–spoken language (presentations or discussions) can be generated from any curricular area to suit the interests and needs of candidates.

Can we assess a candidate’s listening skills for the performance–spoken language by the questions they ask as an audience member during a presentation?

Yes. As long as the questions are relevant to key points from the presentation, then this approach is valid.

What assessment arrangements are available for the performance–spoken language?

For advice on assessment arrangements, please contact SQA’s dedicated assessment arrangements team by emailing aarequests@sqa.org.uk. Information on assessment arrangements is available from our [assessment arrangements web page](#).

Do I need to enter my candidates separately for the performance–spoken language?

Yes, the performance–spoken language requires a separate entry. The appropriate code is found on the front page of the National 5 or Higher English course specification. Please contact your SQA co-ordinator for further information.

Is the result of the performance–spoken language banked?

Yes, when the component is achieved, the result is banked on SQA's system and will not have to be repeated or re-entered.

Does the performance–spoken language assessment need to take place in the same year as assessment of the other external components?

Not necessarily, if a centre has evidence of successful achievement from the previous year (in the case of a two-year course), this can be used as evidence of attainment in the year of presentation.

Can candidates do the performance–spoken language but not the rest of the exam?

No. Candidates can only be certificated for this component when they achieve the National 5 or Higher English course.

Unit assessment

If we want to use a unit assessment support pack but change the text would this have to go through prior verification?

Changing the topic should not fundamentally change the assessment — the assessment standards are what matter. You should use the published assessment support packs as a benchmark when devising your own assessment. If you have any concerns, we recommend the use of SQA's free [prior verification service](#), which gives feedback on your assessment materials.

Are there time limits for completing unit assessments, and should candidates complete these under exam conditions?

No. Candidates do not complete unit assessments in formal timed conditions. The teacher or lecturer must exercise professional responsibility to ensure the evidence is the candidates' own work and procedures should be in place to check this.

Are there word counts for the writing assessments?

There are no word counts for these assessments. The priority is to ensure the assessment standards are met.

The only area of unit assessment where the number of words is taken into account is the Literacy units. For Literacy, minimum word counts apply:

- ◆ National 3: at least 80 words
- ◆ National 4: at least 300 words
- ◆ National 5: at least 500 words

Can candidates use dictionaries for assessments?

Yes, candidates can use dictionaries for all English and Literacy unit assessments.

Do candidates have to handwrite assessable work?

Candidates can type or handwrite their work in English and Literacy.

Can candidates be assessed in groups for talking?

Yes, there is no requirement for candidates to do individual presentations for the talking assessment. A group approach is perfectly valid. For assessment purposes, the definition of a group is two or more people. When assessing candidates in a group situation, teachers and lecturers must assess each candidate individually and keep individual records.

How do I avoid over-assessment?

The best way to avoid over-assessment is to try to integrate unit assessments into teaching and learning programmes. Make sure your assessment questions (for example in reading and listening) give candidates opportunities to achieve the assessment standards. Pieces of writing, prepared for other purposes, can be assessed against the relevant assessment standards.

Units assess minimum competence at any given level, and candidates have to meet each assessment standard only once.

SQA's secure website has unit assessment support packs, which have examples of assessments that combine more than one unit or skill across English and Literacy units.

If candidates do not pass an assessment, do they have to repeat the entire assessment?

Only assessment standards that candidates do not achieve need to be re-assessed. Re-assessment could be asking a candidate to expand on an initially thin answer, or candidates could expand or extend an answer to a question by giving a spoken response, where appropriate. If you accept a spoken response, make a short, written note of the response for your records.

If candidates do not achieve any of the assessment standards, you have to make a judgement on whether they were ready for assessment at that level. Candidates would require further learning and teaching and possibly a new assessment.

How do I know that my assessment judgements are valid?

Teachers and lecturers make assessment judgements all the time. They can ensure that they are on the right lines by comparing their own standards to published assessment exemplars, and by conducting internal verification. An accumulation of teaching, learning and assessment experience contributes greatly to this. SQA external verification provides supportive confirmation of a centre's assessment judgements. SQA publishes exemplification of national standards through its Understanding Standards service on SQA's secure website.

The best support in this is discussion with colleagues, for example asking a colleague to have a look at a piece of writing, or a set of responses to reading or listening. Internal verification is a very important aspect of confirming the validity of your assessments. The [NQ internal verification toolkit](#) may be helpful here.

If I didn't use unit assessment support packs exactly as published, should I be concerned about verification?

When submitting evidence for verification, make sure that you annotate clearly where and why you have made your assessment judgements. Verifiers do not expect the exclusive use of published unit assessment support packs. The main thing for verifiers is that you apply the assessment standards correctly. Sound internal verification procedures help to ensure that everyone has the confidence to make appropriate assessment judgements.

If you are in any doubt about the assessment that you have devised, or if your approach is different from the published unit assessment support packs, SQA provides a free [prior verification service](#) that gives feedback on your assessment materials.

What are the main things to remember when conducting the added value assessment for National 4 English?

The added value unit has been revised for session 2024–25 onwards. It acts as a ‘bringing together’ of the skills candidates learn in the course. In a way, it takes the place of an exam in courses where there is no exam.

The assignment has two parts, and candidates must complete both.

Part 1

Demonstrate understanding, analysis and evaluation of a selected text(s) by responding in one of two ways:

- ◆ write a critical essay of between 600 to 800 words
- Or
- ◆ give an oral presentation of approximately 5 minutes

The response must include:

- ◆ using your own words as far as possible, summarise the main points of the text(s), or part of a longer text
- ◆ by referring to examples, explain how the writer has used language effectively

Part 2

Contribute to a group discussion, or discussion-based activity, on a topic related to the selected text(s).

The outcome and assessment standards are:

1 Apply language skills to investigate a selected text(s) by:

- 1.1 Demonstrating understanding of a straightforward text(s)
- 1.2 Analysing and evaluating a straightforward text(s)
- 1.3 Presenting findings in a critical essay or oral presentation
- 1.4 Discussing a straightforward text(s)

Please refer to the National 4 English added value unit specification and added value unit assessment support pack for full details.

General guidance:

- ◆ candidates must study one text (or texts)
- ◆ the text(s) can be prose fiction, drama, poetry, non-fiction, web pages, film or TV
- ◆ a critical essay should be 600–800 words or an oral presentation should be approximately 5 minutes
- ◆ teachers and lecturers must make reasonably detailed notes of candidates' contribution to a group discussion (you need to provide this for verification purposes)
- ◆ the defining language indicator for National 4 is 'straightforward'
- ◆ examples of assessed added value units are available on the [Understanding Standards web page](#)

Where does literature feature in the National 4 English course?

English can be delivered within the contexts of literature, language and media. It is perfectly acceptable to teach literature for National 4 English. You can assess reading at National 4, and sometimes listening, through literature.

However, if you are assessing reading for Literacy at the same time as you are assessing it for English, the expectation is that you would use a non-fiction text for this combined purpose. You could, of course, select a non-fiction text that suited a themed study of literature.

If National 4 candidates are intending to progress to National 5, it is recommended that they study literature at some point in their National 4 course.

When should I do the added value unit with my S4 National 4 candidates?

The intention is that added value comes after minimum competence. It is a demonstration of a candidate going beyond the acquisition of the course's basic skills. It is a sign for candidates that they have made significant progress, and therefore it is best to do this in the second half of the course. This can give candidates a sense of moving towards the natural completion of the course. Verification for the added value unit is in Round 2, which usually takes place in May.

How do I make it clear that I have carried out internal verification?

As part of the external verification process, there is an expectation that evidence of internal verification is visible. This could take the form of annotated 'double marking', or 'cross marking', where a second assessor notes and comments on where assessment standards have been achieved. The common practice of using different colours of pen is useful here.

Comments, rather than just a series of ticks, make it very clear that a second assessor has reviewed an assessment. If you have had meetings where you have moderated standards, it would be helpful to include a brief note of the meeting along with your sample of assessment materials for external verification.

Are the SCQF level 6 Communication (NC) and Literature 1 units the equivalent of a Higher English course award?

The Communication (NC) and Literature 1 units are not, by definition, a group award but they can be delivered as an alternative to Higher English, as part of a centre-devised course. Some further and higher education institutions accept the combination of both of these qualifications as an alternative to a Higher English course award for certain courses. Please check entry requirements with individual education institutions.

Before deciding to deliver these units, centres must ensure they will fully meet the needs of their candidates. If a candidate wishes to progress onto further study at college or university, the centre or candidate should check that the prospective college or university will accept these units as an alternative to Higher English.

We have published a Guidance for the Communication and Introduction to Literature units document to support the delivery of these units. This is available on the [Higher English web page](#) as well as the [freestanding English units web page](#).

Are there similar units to the level 6 Communication (NC) and Literature 1 units available at level 5?

Yes. There is a one credit Communication unit (J4E4 45) and a one credit Introduction to Literature unit (J4G8 45). The specifications are available on the [freestanding English units web page](#). The units are further supported by assessment support packs, which are available on SQA's secure site.

We have published a Guidance for the Communication and Introduction to Literature units document to support the delivery of these units. This is available on the [Higher English web page](#) as well as the [freestanding English units web page](#).

Are the level 5 Communication and Introduction to Literature units equivalent to National 5 English?

These units are each worth 6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5. Achievement of the Communication unit gives automatic certification of the Core Skill of Communication at SCQF level 5.

These units hold no equivalency to a National 5 English course and do not qualify for the Insight literacy measure.

Are the former component units for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher still available?

Yes, the former component units can all be found on the [freestanding English units web page](#). The unit assessment support packs are all available on SQA's secure site.

Literacy units

Do candidates need to pass the Literacy unit to gain the National 3 or National 4 English course?

Yes, it is part of the course specification. The Literacy units are mandatory within the National 3 and National 4 English qualifications.

How can Literacy be delivered alongside the National 5 English course, or the SCQF level 5 English freestanding units?

A separate entry is required for the National 5 Literacy unit if it is being delivered on its own, or as part of a package alongside the National 5 English course or the SCQF level 5 English freestanding units. Advice on how to do this, and how to generate appropriate evidence, is contained in the Literacy package 4 bridging pack, which can be found on SQA's secure website via your SQA co-ordinator.

The bridging pack refers to naturally occurring evidence for reading, writing and speaking for Literacy, which candidates could produce within the National 5 English course through classroom work, coursework and/or prelims. You need to map this evidence against the Literacy assessment standards, and it is worth highlighting the following:

- ◆ Listening: the National 5 English performance–spoken language does not cover outcome 2 (listening) in the National 5 Literacy unit. The listening element of the performance–spoken language is about responding to spoken language, rather than analysing it. You would need to generate evidence for listening separately if candidates are also doing the Literacy unit.
- ◆ National 5 Literacy outcome 1 (reading) asks candidates to comment on the effectiveness of a piece of reading (assessment standard 1.3). Candidates must make a personal response to the text and support this by making reference to the text.
- ◆ National 5 Literacy outcome 2 (listening) asks candidates to comment on the effectiveness of a listening text (assessment standard 2.3). Candidates make a personal response to the material and support this by making reference to the text.

You could meet assessment standards 1.3 and 2.3 above by inserting a question into your assessments for reading and listening. You could also take, and record, spoken responses from candidates. The bridging pack contains further detail.

Do candidates need to do the National 5 Literacy unit to be credited with level 5 Literacy on Insight?

An A–D award in National 5 English contributes to the Literacy measure on Insight. Achievement of the Literacy unit at SCQF level 5 also contributes to the Literacy measure on Insight.

Note: if a candidate achieves both the National 5 English course (A–D) and the SCQF level 5 Literacy unit they will only be recognised once on the Insight measure for Literacy.

Is it possible to combine the assessment of the Literacy unit with the assessment of the SCQF level 5 English freestanding units?

Combined assessment of Literacy and English is possible and is exemplified in the combined approach unit assessment support packs.

What are the implications for assessment arrangements for the Literacy units?

We recently reviewed and removed [Specification 3](#) for National Literacy units, as above in the '[What are the changes to National 3 and National 4 English for session 2024–25 onwards](#)' question.

You may use a wide range of support methods for these units. Please refer to the '[Supportive practices for National Literacy Units](#)' section of SQA's website for further information.

You will find general questions and answers about National Qualifications on our website at www.sqa.org.uk/faq.