NextGen: HN educator guide

HNC Esports

Qualification code: GHHQ 47

Valid from: August 2026

This guide provides information about the Higher National Certificate (HNC) to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It is for lecturers and assessors, and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver and assess the HNC.

You must read it alongside the grading pack.

Published: April 2026 (version 1.0)

Contents

Purpose of the qualification

HNC Esports provides learners with the technical, strategic and professional knowledge and skills to thrive in the esports industry. It provides a structured pathway into a sector that is projected to significantly contribute to global revenue in the coming years. Combining foundational esports knowledge with forward-looking digital, business, and creative skills, this HNC prepares learners for diverse roles such as event organisers, content creators, coaches, and business managers, while fostering essential transferable meta-skills for lifelong adaptability.

The esports industry demands a unique blend of technical proficiency, creative innovation, and business expertise. Unlike traditional sports or generic digital qualifications, this HNC focuses explicitly on the intersection of gaming, technology, and enterprise. It integrates mandatory units in Esports Foundations; Esports: Game Performance; and Professional Practice in Esports, to establish core competences, while offering flexible specialisation through optional units spanning AI, broadcasting, marketing, and network infrastructure.

Learners can tailor their studies to career aspirations, selecting from technical (AI, Network Infrastructure), creative (Content Creation, Broadcasting), or competitive (Tournament Organisation, Business Management) pathways. This structure ensures learners completing the qualification have a holistic understanding of esports ecosystems and specialised skills, aligned with emerging industry niches.

This HNC embeds critical thinking, collaboration, leadership, and digital fluency through:

- simulated scenarios: planning tournaments, analysing gameplay data, and pitching sponsorship proposals
- reflective practice: portfolios and self-evaluation tasks to cultivate self-awareness and resilience

By integrating meta-skills with sector-specific challenges, learners gain skills, like being agile and ethically minded, to work in esports and other industries.

This HNC meets immediate industry needs, while supporting long-term employability by prioritising adaptability, technical skills, and entrepreneurial thinking.

Structure

Higher National Certificates (HNCs) are at SCQF level 7 and are made up of 120 SCQF credit points (15 Qualifications Scotland credits). HNCs must incorporate at least 80 credit points (10 Qualifications Scotland credits) at SCQF level 7.

Framework

The HNC is made up of mandatory and optional units. Learners must complete all the mandatory units and 48 SCQF credit points (6 Qualifications Scotland credits) from the optional units.

Mandatory units

Unit code	Unit title	Qualifications Scotland credits	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J9K0 47	Esports: Foundations	3	24	7
J9K1 47	Esports: Game Performance	3	24	7
J9K5 47	Professional Practice in Esports	3	24	7

Optional units

Unit code	Unit title	Qualifications Scotland credits	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J869 47	Data Skills	1	8	7
J868 47	Digital Skills	1	8	7
J691 47	Emerging Technologies and Experiences	1	8	7

Unit code	Unit title	Qualifications Scotland credits	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J9JV 47	Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming	2	16	7
J9JW 47	Esports: Business Management	2	16	7
J9JX 47	Esports: Coaching	1	8	7
J9JY 47	Esports: Content Creation	2	16	7
J9K3 47	Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship	1	8	7
J9K2 47	Esports: Tournament Organisation	2	16	7
J9K4 47	Generative AI	1	8	7
J68S 47	Network Infrastructure	2	16	7

The structure is a simple mandatory and optional structure, although there are clear pathways in the framework by grouping some of the optional units, for example:

Esports (Competitive)

Unit code	Unit title	Qualifications Scotland credits	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J9JW 47	Esports: Business Management	2	16	7
J9JX 47	Esports: Coaching	1	8	7
J9K2 47	Esports: Tournament Organisation	2	16	7

Esports (Creative)

Unit code	Unit title	Qualifications Scotland credits	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J9JV 47	Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming	2	16	7
J9JY 47	Esports: Content Creation	2	16	7
J9K3 47	Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship	1	8	7

Units

Unit code	Unit title	Unit overview
J9K0 47	Esports Foundations	This unit introduces learners to the fundamentals of the esports industry, covering its history, structure and key organisations. Learners explore career pathways, economic models, digital communication, technology and ethical considerations within esports. Additionally, learners develop their practical gaming skills, understanding game mechanics, teamwork, and strategic decision-making in competitive play. Professional behaviours, personal attributes, and player wellbeing is also emphasised.
J9K1 47	Esports: Game Performance	This unit covers a range of topics essential for understanding and improving performance in competitive gaming environments. The focus is game playing, individually and in teams, rather than other aspects of esports. Learners consider game mechanics, performance analysis, and the psychological aspects that influence success in esports. They also explore strategies for individual and team improvement, including communication, co-ordination, and tactical planning.
J9K5 47	Professional Practice in Esports	This unit is project-based. Learners work in a team to plan, organise, participate and evaluate a formal esports tournament from conception to completion. They apply and integrate a wide range of competences throughout, and acquire new knowledge and skills in project management, meta-skills and sustainability. Individual work plays an important role. When a project plan has been developed, each learner is responsible for carrying out specific tasks.

Unit code	Unit title	Unit overview
J869 47	Data Skills	This unit develops data skills that can help learners' academic progression and be used in a range of occupations. Learners gain the foundational knowledge and skills they need to understand, use and communicate data in various contexts. They learn about the nature and types of data; data lifecycle; ethical and legal issues related to data; and tools and techniques for statistical analysis and data visualisation.
J868 47	Digital Skills	This unit develops digital competencies and gives learners confidence to apply these skills in a wide range of personal and vocational contexts. Learners cover four topics: hardware and software; cyber security; data analysis; and computer programming.
J691 47	Emerging Technologies and Experiences	This unit introduces learners to new or emerging digital technologies in the public domain. It also covers the associated experiences made possible by these technologies. Learners explore long-term technological trends and the reasons for them; how these trends are manifesting themselves in current and future technologies; and how these technologies can be used vocationally, educationally and socially. It also considers the personal, societal and business applications and implications of these technologies.
J9JV 47	Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming	The unit covers essential technical aspects such as configuring broadcasting software, managing capture tools, and producing high-quality live and pre-recorded content. Learners also gain experience with streaming hardware, including microphones, sound boards, cameras, and lighting, ensuring they understand how to produce professional-level content.
J9JW 47	Esports: Business Management	This unit develops learners' knowledge and skills in managing business operations in the esports industry. It builds on learners' understanding of business principles and applies them to the unique context of esports, covering areas such as the esports ecosystem, legal and ethical challenges, global and cultural aspects, business strategies, technology and innovation, and entrepreneurial skills.

Unit code	Unit title	Unit overview
J9JX 47	Esports: Coaching	This unit provides learners with the knowledge and skills they need to coach individuals and teams in competitive esports environments. Learners develop expertise in analysing coaching frameworks, evaluating player and team performance, and designing ethical, player-centred training programmes.
J9JY 47	Esports: Content Creation	This unit introduces learners to the principles of esports content creation. Learners explore different content types, including streaming, video production, and social media campaigns, alongside storytelling, editing and publishing techniques. Learners examine the end-to-end production process, from conceptualising shoots and capturing dynamic gameplay cinematics to optimising content for broadcast and social media. on the unit emphasises industry-aligned workflows, including collaborative planning, ethical practices, and audience engagement strategies.
J9K3 47	Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship	This unit develops learners' knowledge and skills in marketing and sponsorship in the esports industry. The unit covers areas such as audience analysis, marketing strategies, sponsorship acquisition, and campaign evaluation, and applies them to the unique context of esports.
J9K2 47	Esports: Tournament Organisation	This unit covers a range of topics essential for the successful planning, execution, and evaluation of esports tournaments. Learners gain insights into the intricacies of tournament logistics, including scheduling, staffing, and equipment management. They explore effective marketing and promotional strategies to attract participants and audiences, ensuring the event's success. The unit also emphasises the importance of risk management and contingency planning, preparing learners to handle unexpected challenges that may arise during the tournament.

Unit code	Unit title	Unit overview
J9K4 47	Generative AI	This unit introduces learners to the core concepts of generative AI, including how it works, its real-world applications (such as text, image and music generation) and the tools used to create AI-generated content. The unit covers foundational topics such as large language models (LLMs), ethical considerations, and responsible use, ensuring learners develop both technical understanding and critical awareness. Practical activities allow them to experiment with generative AI platforms.
J68S 47	Network Infrastructure	This unit introduces learners to the elements that comprise the planning and implementation of a network infrastructure environment. They use appropriate methods to plan logical and physical network topologies, and identify the types of operating systems, network hardware and services likely to be within a network infrastructure. Learners also plan appropriate network addressing schemes and physical aspects, such as cabling and placement of servers. They then consider the management and security of a network infrastructure.

Aims of the qualification

General aims

1. Prepare learners for a range of roles in the esports industry by fostering technical, creative, and business-oriented expertise.
2. Develop a holistic understanding of esports ecosystems, including cultural, ethical, and commercial dimensions.
3. Equip learners to respond to emerging trends and opportunities in gaming, technology, and esports culture, including entrepreneurial initiatives.
4. Support the development of practical gameplay skills, teamwork, and strategic decision-making in esports settings.
5. Develop professional behaviours and personal attributes such as collaboration, resilience, leadership, and entrepreneurial thinking, aligned with industry expectations.
6. Develop meta-skills that complement technical and professional knowledge and skills.
7. Develop Learning for Sustainability skills, knowledge, understanding and values.

Specific aims

1. Develop a broad understanding of the structure of the esports industry's structure, including key organisations, economic models, career pathways, and the role of technology in esports development and competition.
2. Explore ethical, legal, and wellbeing considerations relevant to esports players, teams, and esports professionals.
3. Apply tactical, strategic, and psychological approaches to improve individual and team performance in esports games.
4. Use data analysis and performance feedback to refine gameplay, enhance team dynamics, and inform decision-making.
5. Demonstrate professional behaviours such as time management, communication, and accountability in individual and team-based contexts.

6. Use digital communication tools and platforms to support branding, audience engagement, and community development in esports.
7. Apply reflective practice and professional development strategies to support continuous personal growth, project delivery, and industry readiness.
8. Understand and apply principles of online safety, safeguarding, and data protection in all esports-related activities.

Resource requirements

There are specific resource requirements for this qualification.

The following resource requirements relate to the Esports: Game Performance unit.

This unit requires dedicated gaming hardware and software. Although gaming PCs are not a requirement, we strongly recommend that learners have access to gaming PCs to enhance their learning and experience.

While there is no single correct or required hardware specification for delivering this unit, centres should ensure that their PC hardware is appropriate for the titles and activities they intend to use. Specifications vary depending on the games selected, the performance expectations of learners, and the needs of specific assessments. Therefore, centres should have hardware that aligns with the technical demands of their chosen games, ensuring smooth performance, reliable connectivity, and an authentic competitive experience for learners.

A suitably configured PC can include:

- Intel Core i5 CPU (10th generation or later)
- 16Gb RAM (DDR 4 or better)
- nVidia 1050 GPU (or better)
- fast storage (such as SSD) of at least 500Gb capacity
- 24” (or bigger) gaming monitor (75Hz or better)
- mechanical gaming keyboard
- gaming mouse
- gaming headset
- broadband internet connection

Centres must also have appropriate software, such as Windows 11™ and a game launcher such as Steam™. PC games are normally downloaded through game stores such as Epic Games™, Steam™ and Origin Games™. Centres should create a specific account for gaming, rather than learners creating separate accounts. The store and game of choice only needs to be installed once on each machine.

Alternatively, learners could use gaming consoles, such as a PlayStation™, Xbox™ or Nintendo Switch™.

For other units such as Content Creation, Coaching, and Broadcasting and Streaming, you need additional resources to deliver learning effectively. Centres should select and provide the most appropriate hardware and software to support high-quality delivery wherever possible. The following examples are not needed for the full course but may be required for individual units on a case-by-case basis:

- streaming studios: green screens, professional microphones, lighting kits, and software (for example OBS Studio, Streamlabs)
- performance tracking software (for example Mobalytics, Tracker.gg)
- content creation tools: Adobe Creative Suite, Canva, and video editing software
- network infrastructure: low-latency servers and cybersecurity protocols

Centres must consider the age of their learners and game PEGI rating to ensure age appropriateness. Centres determine game choice. The following table provides examples of popular esports games that are free.

Game title	Genre	Age rating	Download from	Notes
Fortnite	Battle Royale	PEGI 12	Epic Games Store, PlayStation™, Xbox™, Nintendo Switch™	Cross-platform play; major esports events like Fortnight Champion series (FNCS).
League of Legends	Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA)	PEGI 12	Riot Games Client	Most-played esports title (*at the time of writing)*; hosts the World Championship.
Valorant	Tactical Frames Per Second (FPS)	PEGI 16	Riot Games Client	Competitive 5v5 shooter with a growing esports scene.
Apex Legends	Battle Royale	PEGI 16	Steam™, PlayStation™, Xbox™	ALGS (Apex Legends Global Series) is a premier tournament circuit.
Dota 2	MOBA	PEGI 12	Steam™	Home to The International, the largest prize pool in esports history.
Counter-Strike 2	Tactical FPS	PEGI 16	Steam™	Free upgrade for counter strike (CS) players; core esports title with Majors.
Rocket League	Sports (Soccer and Cars)	PEGI 3	Epic Games Store, PlayStation™, Xbox™, Nintendo Switch™	Cross-platform; Rocket League Championship Series) (RLCS) is a key event.
Brawl Stars	MOBA (Mobile	PEGI 7	App Store, Google Play	Mobile-focused esports title with global tournaments.
PUBG Mobile	Battle Royale (Mobile)	PEGI 16	App Store, Google Play	PMPL (PUBG Mobile Pro League) is a major competitive circuit.
Wild Rift	MOBA (Mobile)	PEGI 12	App Store, Google Play	Mobile version of League of Legends; hosts Wild Rift Champions.

Account management

Most game platforms, such as Steam™ and Epic Games™, require every individual game account to have its own unique login and email address. This means centres need a simple way to create and manage multiple separate accounts, especially when each device must be authenticated with its own profile. One effective method for doing this is using Gmail ‘plus addresses’, which allows you to generate many unique emails that connect back to a single inbox.

Gmail allows you to create unlimited variations of your email using a +tag, and they all redirect to your main inbox.

For example:

- main email → schoolesports@gmail.com
- device 1 → schoolesports+pc01@gmail.com
- device 2 → schoolesports+pc02@gmail.com
- device 3 → schoolesports+pc03@gmail.com

All messages will go to schoolesports@gmail.com, but each login will appear as a different account.

You can achieve the same result using email forwarding, however that requires more setup and moderation.

Mapping games to the HNC Esports framework

The table below maps the different games to the HNC Esports framework, showing where each game fits best.

Unit code	Unit title	Recommended games to use	Rationale
J9K0 47	Esports Foundations	• Counter-Strike 2 • Dota 2 • Fortnite • League of Legends	Solid case studies to explore contrasts in the industry: open vs franchised circuits, crowd-funding vs publisher funding; evolving fan experiences.
J9K1 47	Esports: Game Performance	• Brawl Stars • Counter-Strike 2 • Dota 2 • Fortnite • League of Legends • PUBG Mobile • Rocket League • Valorant • Wild Rift	Varied genres let learners practise video-on-demand (VOD) review, data-led performance tracking; and cross-platform team competitions.

Unit code	Unit title	Recommended games to use	Rationale
J9K5 47	Professional Practice in Esports	• League of Legends • Valorant VCT • CS2 Majors and PGL • Rocket League RLCS • Fortnite FNCS	Learners can: • practise real tournament workflows • explore income distribution • practise health and safety processes • review broadcast packages
J869 47	Data Skills	• Dota 2 • League of Legends • Valorant • Rocket League	Public application programming interfaces (APIs) let learners: • pull JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) • run Spark and/or Python dashboards • link back to game performance unit
J868 47	Digital Skills	• Brawl Stars • Fortnite • Rocket League	The Unreal Editor for Fortnite (UEFN) provides unreal-based level creation and scripting for rapid prototyping.
J691 47	Emerging Technologies and Experiences	• Fortnite • PUBG Mobile • Valorant	Good for: • discussing metaverse-style events • mobile-first Local Area Network (LAN) design • cutting-edge anti-cheat technology

Unit code	Unit title	Recommended games to use	Rationale
J9JV 47	Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming	• Counter-Strike 2 • League of Legends • Rocket League • Valorant	All feature built-in observer tools and spectator modes (for example League of Legend's deep spectator UI).
J9JW 47	Esports: Business Management	• League of Legends • PUBG Mobile • Rocket League • Valorant	Learners can: • compare franchise and publisher fees • explore sponsorship tiers • explore crowdfunding • explore intellectual property rights
J9JX 47	Esports: Coaching	• Counter-Strike 2 • League of Legends • Rocket League • Valorant • Wild Rift	Tactical depth and replay tools make these games ideal for draft preparation, video on demand (VOD) breakdowns and mental resilience sessions.
J9JY 47	Esports: Content Creation	• Brawl Stars • Fortnite • Rocket League	Learners could design a Fortnite island or produce a post-match Rocket League highlight reel.

Unit code	Unit title	Recommended games to use	Rationale
J9K3 47	Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship	• Fortnite • League of Legends • Rocket League • Valorant	Learners could develop mock pitch decks and key performance indicator (KPI) reports using real-world sponsor activations.
J9K2 47	Esports: Tournament Organisation	• Counter-Strike 2 • Dota 2 • Fortnite • League of Legends • Rocket League	These games provide an ideal sandbox for: • bracket software • rulesets • server admin • referee role-play
J9K4 47	Generative AI	• Dota 2 • League of Legends	Dota 2 is a great esports AI case study, showing reinforcement learning agents beating pros and sparking debate on fair play.
J68S 47	Network Infrastructure	• Counter-Strike 2 • Fortnite • League of Legends • PUBG Mobile • Valorant	Learners can: • trace latency paths • configure LAN servers • stress-test net-code

Top titles by pathways

Pathway	Top three games	Notes
Esports (Competitive)	Fortnite, League of Legends and Rocket League	These games offer replay tools, content opportunities, and brand-rich case studies.
Esports (Creative)	League of Legends, Rocket League and Valorant	These games offer tactical depth, strong coaching potential, and clear business ecosystems.

Team sizes per title

Game title	Suggested team size and solo options	Notes
Counter-Strike 2	5 versus 5	Standard competitive format.
Valorant	5 versus 5	Universally used in Riot-sanctioned events.
League of Legends	5 versus 5	Standard across all major leagues
Dota 2	5 versus 5	The international and pro circuits all use this format.
Wild Rift	5 versus 5	Mirrors League of Legends structure

Game title	Suggested team size and solo options	Notes
Rocket League	3 versus 3 (standard), also 2 versus 2 or 1 versus 1	Rocket League Championship Series (RLCS) uses 3 versus 3. Other formats appear in community events.
Fortnite	Solo, duos, trios	Fortnight Championship Series (FNCS) often uses trios. This varies between seasons.
Fortnite Creative	1 to 16+	Depends entirely on purpose and map design. Good for smaller events.
PUBG Mobile	4-player squad, also solo and/or duo	Esports events primarily use squads.
Brawl Stars	3 versus 3 or solos	Official Brawl Stars Championship format. Solo Showdown is available but not typically used in competitions.

The team sizes listed are recommended formats based on common competitive structures, not fixed rules. We encourage centres, lecturers, and learners to adjust team sizes as required. For units such as Coaching, Broadcasting and Streaming, Content Creation, and Professional Practice in Esports, alternative team sizes (including individual work) may be more appropriate depending on the activity or assessment design. However, for competitions and events, team sizes should aim to follow that of the expected professional standard.

Who is this qualification for?

This qualification is suitable for a wide range of learners, regardless of background. Entry to this qualification is at your centre's discretion. While experience in esports, gaming, or digital media can be helpful, it is not essential.

The ideal route into this qualification is from NPA Esports at SCQF levels 5 or 6, along with an appropriate Core Skill profile. Numeracy skills are particularly important. It also welcomes learners from a range of other qualifications, such as Sport and Fitness, Business, Media Studies, Computer Games Development, and Digital Design, or progressing from unrelated areas. These pathways reflect the wide skill base required in the esports industry, from coaching and analysis to marketing, journalism, and event management.

Another route of entry is adults who have work experience and an interest in competitive computer games.

Recognising prior learning

Qualifications Scotland recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts. Formal learning is learning certificated by a recognised awarding or professional body. Non-formal learning includes learning such as employers' in-house training courses. Informal learning is learning based on experience from a variety of environments that is not formally assessed.

It is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full HNC.

You can find more information and guidance about the recognition of prior learning on our website.

Articulation and progression

HNC Esports is part of an emerging academic and professional landscape. Learners can progress directly to HND Esports.

This qualification is designed to provide a strong foundation for further study in areas such as:

- esports management
- event production and media
- business, marketing, or digital technologies
- related creative industries

You should discuss and establish progression routes with higher education institutions and industry stakeholders. Learners may also apply directly to relevant university programmes where entry is considered on a case-by-case basis.

In terms of employment, this HNC equips learners with transferable skills applicable across multiple sectors, including:

- esports event support or co-ordination
- social media and digital content roles
- community management in gaming or digital environments
- entry-level roles in marketing, media, or creative sectors

Credit transfer arrangements

Centres can make decisions about transferring credit. They can transfer credit if the subject-related content of the units is broadly equivalent. Centres should consider the currency of a learner's achievement before transferring credit.

Recommended Core Skills entry profile

Learners should have the following Core Skills at the stated SCQF levels before starting this qualification. This information can help identify learners who may need additional support.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile
Communication	5
Numeracy	5
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5
Problem Solving	5
Working with Others	5

How the qualification meets employer and higher education institution needs

This qualification is designed in collaboration with employers, higher education institutions (HEIs), practitioners and professional bodies to meet the sector need.

The following tables show how the qualification can benefit employers and HEIs by equipping learners with the necessary skill set:

- Table 1 shows how units map to the aims of the qualification.
- Table 2 shows how the units map to professional standards in the esports industry.

Table 1: mapping qualification aims to units

Key: aim is directly relevant to unit (X), aim is optional in this unit (O), aim is not applicable to this unit (N/A)

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7	Aim 8	Aim 9	Aim 10	Aim 11	Aim 12	Aim 13	Aim 14	Aim 15
J9K0 47	Esports: Foundations	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	O	X	O	X	X
J9K1 47	Esports: Game Performance	X	O	O	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	O
J9K5 47	Professional Practice in Esports	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
J869 47	Data Skills	O	O	O	N/A	O	O	N/A	O	N/A	N/A	X	O	O	O	O
J868 47	Digital Skills	O	O	O	N/A	O	O	N/A	O	N/A	N/A	O	O	X	O	O
J691 47	Emerging Technologies and Experiences	O	O	X	N/A	O	O	N/A	O	N/A	N/A	N/A	O	O	O	O

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7	Aim 8	Aim 9	Aim 10	Aim 11	Aim 12	Aim 13	Aim 14	Aim 15
J9JV 47	Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming	O	O	O	N/A	O	O	N/A	O	N/A	N/A	N/A	O	X	O	O
J9JW 47	Esports: Business Management	O	O	O	N/A	X	O	O	X	O	N/A	N/A	X	X	X	O
J9JX 47	Esports: Coaching	O	O	O	X	O	O	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	X	O	O	O	O
J9JY 47	Esports: Content Creation	O	O	O	N/A	O	O	N/A	O	N/A	N/A	N/A	O	X	O	O
J9K3 47	Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship	O	O	O	N/A	O	O	O	O	O	N/A	N/A	O	X	O	O
J9K2 47	Esports: Tournament Organisation	O	O	O	N/A	O	O	O	O	O	N/A	N/A	O	X	O	O
J9K4 47	Generative AI	O	O	X	N/A	O	O	N/A	O	N/A	N/A	N/A	O	N/A	O	O

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7	Aim 8	Aim 9	Aim 10	Aim 11	Aim 12	Aim 13	Aim 14	Aim 15
J68S 47	Network Infrastructure	O	N/A	N/A	N/A	O	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	O	N/A	O	X

Table 2: mapping professional standards to units

At the time of writing, there were no esports-specific National Occupational Standards (NOS) in Scotland or the UK. Furthermore, Scottish Esports did not have a publicly listed, comprehensive set of professional standards specific to esports. However, the British Esports Federation (BEF) had begun establishing professional standards, primarily focusing on coaching and safeguarding in esports. The table below shows how the units in the HNC Esports align with these standards.

Unit code	Unit title	BEF Professional standard and initiative
J9K0 47	Esports: Foundations	Educational and career pathway advocacy — partnerships with schools/colleges to promote esports careers.
J9K1 47	Esports: Game Performance	Player development pathways (within the Coach Development Framework) — holistic player growth, including physical, mental, and strategic competences, and game performance analytics.
J9K5 47	Professional Practice in Esports	Safeguarding and ethical practices — emphasis on player welfare, inclusivity, professional conduct, and codes of ethics.
J869 47	Data Skills	Data-informed practice — use of analytics in coaching, performance monitoring, business decisions, and digital engagement metrics.
J868 47	Digital Skills	Baseline digital competence — essential ICT literacy for esports environments including platform use, cybersecurity, and collaborative tools.
J691 47	Emerging Technologies and Experiences	Innovation awareness — exploration of VR, AR, and XR, metaverse applications, and immersive technologies (aligns with future-focused BEF education goals).

Unit code	Unit title	BEF Professional standard and initiative
J9JV 47	Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming	Broadcasting best practices Audience engagement Platform compliance and use of streaming tools to reach and grow audiences
J9JW 47	Esports: Business Management	Ethical sponsorship and entrepreneurship (advocated at the time of writing) — sustainable business models and financial literacy for esports environments.
J9JX 47	Esports: Coaching	Coach Development Framework (in development at time of writing) coaching competences including psychology, feedback, and strategic planning.
J9JY 47	Esports: Content Creation	Quality content production — creation of engaging, brand-aligned, and audience-specific multimedia content.
J9K3 47	Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship	Responsible marketing guidelines — ethical brand partnerships and inclusive audience outreach.
J9K2 47	Esports: Tournament Organisation	Event standards (in development at time of writing) — organisation of safe, inclusive, and technically sound events; includes venue compliance and operational logistics.
J9K4 47	Generative AI	Emerging technology literacy — understanding AI applications in esports (for example broadcast automation, performance analysis) and ethical use of AI tools.
J68S 47	Network Infrastructure	Technical standards for competitive play — knowledge of networking, latency optimisation, hardware and software setups.

The standards marked as ‘in development’ are based on current BEF roadmap communications and strategic goals (for example, Coach Development Framework, Event Standards).

Industry-aligned mappings (like AI, data, and digital skills) reflect BEF-endorsed competences or widespread professional expectations in the UK esports sector.

Table 3: assessment strategy for mandatory units of the qualification

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method	Integration opportunities
J9K0 47	Esports: Foundations	Knowledge evidence: test for outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 5. The test can comprise of short-answer questions. Performance evidence: participation in a competitive team-based gaming activity.	Alternatively, knowledge evidence can be captured through a project-based portfolio that can be integrated with Esports: Business Management or Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship.
J9K1 47	Esports: Game Performance	Knowledge evidence: written assignments, tests, or presentations. Product evidence: game plans, strategy documents, and performance analysis reports. Performance evidence: gameplay in simulated or actual competitive scenarios (observation checklists).	For performance analysis, this unit can be integrated with Esports: Coaching or Data Skills.
J9K5 47	Professional Practice in Esports	Product evidence: project development plan and outputs. Performance evidence: professional conduct throughout project (reflective journal).	This unit integrates well with Esports: Tournament Organisation.

Table 4: assessment strategy for optional units (thematic clusters)

Esports (competitive)

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method	Integration opportunities
J9JW 47	Esports: Business Management	Knowledge evidence: broadcast and/or podcast. Product evidence: esports innovation hackathon or live pitch competition.	This unit can be integrated with Esports Foundations and Esports: Tournament Organisation. If learners select another optional combination, it can also be integrated with Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship.
J9JX 47	Esports: Coaching	Knowledge evidence: portfolio with analyses of coaching methodologies. Product evidence: 2-to-3-week training plan. Performance evidence: applying coaching skills (reflective journal, observation checklists).	This unit links directly to Esports: Game Performance. If learners take an alternative option, this unit can also be integrated with the Data Skills unit.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method	Integration opportunities
J9K2 47	Esports: Tournament Organisation	Knowledge evidence: test or report or reports covering aspects of tournament organisation. Product evidence: Tournament plan and associated documentation. Performance evidence: Deliver esports event (evaluation report).	This unit integrates well with Professional Practice in Esports. Furthermore, the unit can align with Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming and Network Infrastructure.

Esports (creative)

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method	Integration opportunities
J9JV 47	Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming	Knowledge evidence: report or presentation for outcomes 1 and 5. Test for outcome 2. Product evidence: live or recorded broadcast. Performance evidence: live stream (observation checklist).	This unit integrates well with Esports: Content Creation. If an alternative combination of options is taken, the unit could also be integrated with Network Infrastructure.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method	Integration opportunities
J9JY 47	Esports: Content Creation	Knowledge evidence: reports, essays or research-based tasks for outcomes 1 and 2. Product evidence: comprehensive esports content package, including all supporting documentation. Performance evidence: professional behaviours and use of equipment.	This unit integrates well with Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming, and Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship. If learners take an alternative combination of options, it can also align with the units relating to Digital Skills or Generative AI.
J9K3 47	Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship	Knowledge evidence: group project (esports brand launch). Product evidence: sponsorship simulation pitch (observation checklists).	The unit can be integrated with Esports: Content Creation and Esports: Foundations. If learners take an alternative combination of options, it can also align with the unit Esports: Business Management.

Technical and digital units — practical focus

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method	Integration opportunities
J869 47	Data Skills	Product evidence: practical assignment related to esports.	This unit integrates well with Esports: Game Performance; Esports: Coaching; or Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship.
J868 47	Digital Skills	Product evidence: practical assignment, case studies, project or reports related to esports.	This unit can be integrated across all units.
J861 47	Emerging Technologies and Experiences	Knowledge evidence: test for outcomes 1 and 2; research activity for outcome 3.	From a creative viewpoint, this unit can be integrated with Esports: Content Creation and Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming.
J9K4 47	Generative AI	Knowledge evidence: test for outcomes 1, 3 and 4. Product evidence: creation of prompts for a variety of scenarios, for outcome 2.	This unit can be integrated with Data Skills or Esports: Content Creation.
J68S 47	Network Infrastructure	Knowledge evidence: multiple-choice assessment covering all outcomes. Product evidence: case study or scenario-based report.	This unit aligns well with Esports: Tournament Organisation or Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming.

The assessment methods included in the tables are only suggestions and we encourage centres to devise their own assessments to meet their learners' needs and context.

Meta-skills

Every NextGen: HN Qualification gives learners the opportunity to develop meta-skills.

Meta-skills are transferable behaviours and abilities that help people to adapt and succeed in life, study and work. There are three categories of meta-skills: self-management, social intelligence and innovation. Each of these is made up of four meta-skills and a number of sub-skills.

- Self-management — focusing, integrity, adapting, initiative
- Social intelligence — communicating, feeling, collaborating, leading
- Innovation — curiosity, creativity, sense-making, critical thinking

From early in the qualification, we want learners to identify and understand the meta-skills they can develop, and to appreciate the personal and professional value of these skills. We want to support learners to continue to articulate, use and build on them long after they have achieved their qualification. In this way, we help learners to develop broad skills profiles, enabling them to thrive in a changing world.

Every NextGen: HN unit signposts opportunities for learners to develop meta-skills, and there is an assessed outcome in one of the mandatory units. When you make your whole-qualification grade decisions, you consider learners' commitment to engaging with meta-skills development.

You do not assess learners on their competence or progress in individual meta-skills. Instead, you assess them on evidence that they have engaged with a personal process of development. Meta-skills development is founded on a clear process of self-assessment, goal setting, action planning and reflective practice.

You can find meta-skills teaching, learning and assessment resources on our meta-skills web page.

Meta-skills in HNC Esports

Meta-skills are embedded throughout this HNC, equipping learners to navigate the complexities of esports through its units. In **Professional Practice in Esports**, learners cultivate critical thinking and adapting, by planning and executing projects. For instance, designing a sustainable esports event requires balancing environmental considerations with logistical realities. Also, reflecting on team performance improves learners' self-awareness and resilience. Ethical dilemmas, such as addressing inclusivity in sponsorship agreements, require ethical decision-making, preparing learners to lead with integrity in fast-paced environments.

The **Esports: Game Performance** unit builds collaboration and strategic agility through tactical gameplay analysis. Learners dissect team dynamics, identifying communication gaps and refining strategies, which mirrors the high-stakes decision-making of competitive play. Psychological strategies, like stress management drills, help learners to manage their emotions, whereas reflective practice allows learners to identify issues or errors, and transform them into learning opportunities.

In **Esports: Tournament Organisation**, learners design and manage events, which helps develop meta-skills like problem-solving and leadership. Creating a tournament budget, for example, requires negotiating vendor contracts. Learners may have to troubleshoot a last-minute tech failure, demonstrating resourcefulness. Evaluating marketing strategies develops their analytical thinking, as learners analyse audience engagement data to refine future initiatives.

The **Esports: Business Management** unit integrates entrepreneurial thinking and cultural awareness. For example, learners develop strategic foresight by analysing the esports ecosystem and crafting business models for emerging markets. Learners tackle legal challenges, like player contracts, making them focus on ethical reasoning. They also develop cross-cultural communication knowledge when adapting their strategies, such as thinking about localised monetisation tactics for regional fanbases. When applying technology to enhance operations, learners experiment with AI-driven fan engagement tools, building adaptive innovation.

Launching hypothetical ventures, like a grassroots esports league, tests risk management and resilience through iterative pitch feedback from industry mentors.

Across these units, meta-skills are not abstract concepts, but applied competences. A learner in Business Management might prototype a blockchain-based ticketing system, blending technical creativity with ethical considerations around data privacy.

Meta-skills are essential for a successful career in the esports industry. These capabilities ensure readiness not just for entry-level roles but for lifelong progression in esports and beyond.

Learning for Sustainability

Context

The United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UK in 2015, has shaped the development of Scottish, national and international sustainability policy. It sets out the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are central to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework. Learning for Sustainability (LfS) is a commitment to embedding the SDGs in Scottish education.

LfS embraces global citizenship, sustainable development, social justice, human rights, climate change, biodiversity loss, equality and inclusion. Learners develop their capacity to deal with the unpredictable social, economic and environmental challenges facing our rapidly changing world.

LfS combines:

- education for sustainable development (ESD)
- global citizenship
- outdoor learning

ESD is the internationally used term for sustainability education. Although LfS has a broader remit, the terms are largely interchangeable. Colleges and universities tend to use ESD, while schools usually use LfS. Both focus on a broad range of social, economic and environmental themes and approaches across all levels of education. Qualifications Scotland uses LfS as an umbrella term.

Learning for Sustainability in NextGen: HN Qualifications

Sustainability is a core component in this qualification.

Learners who complete this qualification should have:

- a general understanding of social, economic and environmental sustainability
- a general understanding of the SDGs
- a deeper understanding of subject-specific sustainability
- the confidence to apply the skills, knowledge, understanding and values they develop in the next stage of their life

Sustainability is embedded as an outcome in the Professional Practice in Esports unit.

Learners who complete this outcome can:

- assess their own knowledge and understanding of sustainability and the SDGs
- identify and describe sustainability in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)
- explain how one product or process relevant to esports could be made more sustainable and help meet the aims of at least two selected UN SDGs.

You can cover any of the SDGs that are relevant to the subject area.

The Professional Practice in Esports unit provides a direct pathway for Learning for Sustainability (LfS) by asking learners to align esports practices to the SDGs. For example, learners might analyse energy consumption in esports tournaments or propose solutions to reduce e-waste from gaming. This encourages critical thinking and creativity as learners reimagine processes, such as event logistics or equipment recycling, to meet sustainability targets.

LfS opportunities can be found across all units. Some examples are:

- Esports: Tournament Organisation — learners can design events with sustainability benchmarks, such as selecting eco-friendly venues (SDG 11: Sustainable Cities) or minimising single-use plastics.
- Network Infrastructure — learners can explore energy-efficient server solutions or advocate for renewable energy in data centres (SDG 9: Industry Innovation).
- Esports: Content Creation — learners can promote sustainability through streaming campaigns (for example raising awareness about SDG 13: Climate Action).
- Esports: Business Management — learners can think about circular economy models for esports startups, such as refurbishing gaming peripherals (SDG 8: Decent Work and SDG 12: Responsible Consumption).

Emerging Technologies and Experiences, and Data Skills units offer additional options, for example analysing environmental impact metrics. Also, Esports: Game Performance can integrate LfS by teaching learners about inclusive, low-energy gaming set-ups, which aligns with SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities.

By embedding LfS across the curriculum, learners gain a holistic understanding of sustainability as a cross-sector requirement, preparing them to address global challenges through esports innovation.

Find out more about Qualifications Scotland's approach on the NextGen: HN Learning for Sustainability web page. There is an LfS reflective template available in the resources section. You may find it helpful as a starting point for considering how the SDGs are, or could be, embedded in a qualification, unit or assessment.

Grading

Please see the grading pack for this qualification for more information on making grade judgements.

Grading in NextGen: HN Qualifications produces a valid and reliable record of a learner's level of achievement across the breadth of the qualification content.

As well as grading the whole qualification, you assess individual units on a pass or fail basis. Each unit has evidence requirements that learners must achieve before you can consider them for whole-qualification grading.

Whole-qualification grade outcomes

Learners who pass NextGen: HN Qualifications receive one of the following grade outcomes for the qualification as a whole:

- Achieved with Distinction
- Achieved with Merit
- Achieved

To determine a learner's whole-qualification grade, you use the grading matrix provided in the grading pack to assess and judge their performance across the key aspects of the HNC. You must align your judgements with the following whole-qualification grade descriptors.

Whole-qualification grade descriptors

Achieved with Distinction

The learner has achieved an excellent standard across the course content, going significantly beyond meeting the qualification requirements. They showed a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of course concepts and principles, and consistently used them to apply skills to complete high-quality work. They engaged significantly with the process of developing their meta-skills in the context of their HN Qualification.

Achieved with Merit

The learner has achieved a very good standard across the course content, going beyond meeting the qualification requirements. They showed a very good knowledge and understanding of course concepts and principles, and consistently used them to apply skills to complete work of a standard above that expected for an Achieved grade. They actively engaged with the process of developing their meta-skills in the context of their HN Qualification.

Achieved

The learner has achieved a good standard across the course content, credibly meeting the qualification requirements. They showed a good knowledge and understanding of course concepts and principles, and used them to apply skills to complete work of the required standard. They engaged with the process of developing their meta-skills in the context of their HN Qualification.

Approaches to delivery and assessment

HNC Esports equips learners with the necessary knowledge, skills, and professional practices to thrive in the dynamic esports industry. It emphasises both foundational expertise and specialised pathways, ensuring learners can adapt to the evolving demands of the sector while addressing critical issues like sustainability, ethics, and innovation.

Those pursuing the Competitive pathway (by selecting Esports: Business Management; Esports: Coaching; and Esports: Tournament Organisation), gain skills in event logistics, team leadership, and entrepreneurial strategy.

Alternatively, the Creative pathway (by selecting Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming; Esports: Content Creation; and Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship) focuses on content production, audience engagement, and brand partnerships. Technical learners can opt for units like Emerging Technologies and Experiences, or Network Infrastructure, to explore innovations such as VR streaming or energy-efficient server design.

Delivery should adopt a blended learning model, integrating online modules for theory (for example esports ecosystems, SDG frameworks) with face-to-face workshops for practical skills. For example, learners can use platforms like Moodle to study tournament regulations remotely, then attend labs to simulate live broadcasts using Open Broadcaster Software (OBS) Studio or plan events using Matchbook software.

Project-based learning is central to this qualification. In Professional Practice in Esports, learners can audit the carbon footprint of a local esports event and propose renewable energy solutions. In Tournament Organisation they can arrange a small-scale competition with real budgets and safety protocols.

Centres should take account of industry-aligned standards and ensure they provide learner-centred support. Embedding tools like Tableau for data visualisation or AWS Cloud for server projects would ensure technical proficiency.
Additionally, partnerships with bodies, like Scottish Esports or the British Esports

Federation, can help integrate safeguarding frameworks and coaching best practices.

By prioritising hands-on learning, sustainability, and industry partnerships, the qualification not only meets current sector needs but also prepares learners to shape the future of esports responsibly.

Setting expectations early

It is important to distinguish between personal gaming interests and the professional world of esports. Learners may assume the course is about playing games, but the HNC focuses on areas like event planning, business development, content creation, team management, and esports media.

We recommend that you introduce the esports industry with a focus on roles beyond the player (for example shoutcasters, event managers, content producers) and provide an overview of the course structure and assessment methods early on in the course.

Learners must understand that professionalism, teamwork, and project-based learning are core expectations in this qualification.

Bridging skill gaps

Learners arrive with varying levels of confidence in specific areas, such as academic writing. Early support in these areas helps build their confidence and can reduce barriers later in the qualification.

Core Skill area	Common gaps	Suggested support
Academic writing and research	Structuring assignments, referencing	Run writing workshops, use sample assignments
Business and marketing	Financial terms, target markets	Introduce core concepts early through real-world esports case studies

Core Skill area	Common gaps	Suggested support
Media and digital tools	OBS, video editing, social media strategy	Provide hands-on tutorials in the first term
Project and time management	Meeting deadlines, planning group tasks	Use project trackers, team planning tools (for example Trello or Planner)

The esports industry is dynamic, fast-paced and highly collaborative. Embedding professional behaviours early on prepares learners for industry roles and for the demands of higher-level study.

Sequencing or integrating units

When delivering HNC Esports, you should deliver the mandatory units first to ensure learners cover the core knowledge before moving on to more specialised knowledge and practical skills:

1. Esports: Foundations (semester 1)
2. Esports: Game Performance (semester 1)
3. Professional Practice in Esports (semester 2)

You should deliver the optional units depending on the option combination selected.

For the Esports (Competitive) pathway, we recommend the following sequence of delivery:

1. Esports: Business Management (semester 2)
2. Esports: Coaching (semester 2)
3. Esports: Tournament Organisation (semester 2)
4. Additional option for example Data Skills (semester 2)

Alternatively, if learners follow the Esports (Creative) pathway, we recommend the following sequence of delivery:

1. Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming (semester 2)
2. Esports: Content Creation (semester 2)
3. Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship (semester 2)
4. Additional option, for example Emerging Technologies and Experiences (semester 2)

You can integrate units throughout the delivery of the HNC for a seamless blending of theory and practice. This offers opportunities to combine assessment tasks, resulting in reduced assessment load for learners and educators. Below are some suggestions of where integration could take place:

Route	Potential unit integration
Esports (Competitive)	• Esports: Tournament Organisation and Esports: Business Management • Esports: Game Performance and Esports: Coaching • Professional Practice in Esports and all units in competitive pathway
Esports (Creative)	• Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming and Esports: Content Creation • Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship and Esports: Content Creation • Professional Practice in Esports and all units in creative pathway

Additional guidance on integrated or holistic assessment

Holistic or integrated assessment focuses on assessing a number of outcomes in a unit together, or in some cases, assessing the unit as a whole, rather than by outcome. When assessing a unit of competence holistically, the assessment activities integrate a number of aspects of the competence. Holistic or integrated assessment can reduce the time spent on assessment and can promote greater equity in the assessment process.

When developing or revising a NextGen: HN Qualification, Qualifications Scotland works with a development team to devise an appropriate assessment strategy that accommodates holistic or integrated assessment. However, the practice of integrating units for the purposes of learning and teaching is a centre-led activity.

Units are designed to facilitate holistic or integrated assessment approaches that prevent large, unwieldy assessments.

Sometimes more than one piece of evidence is needed for a unit. For example, if a unit is about coaching, a learner would need to produce evidence of performance (applying the skills to coach an individual or team) and product (a coaching training plan).

Evidence requirements must do what they say: specify requirements for evidence of learner competence in the unit. The evidence must be of sufficient quality for an assessor or verifier to judge that the learner has achieved the unit.

Assessment should balance academic rigour with real-world relevance. Esports: Foundations might require a report analysing ethical dilemmas like loot boxes, while Game Performance could involve live gameplay assessments with peer reviews. For Professional Practice in Esports, learners demonstrate their understanding of the full esports lifecycle, by organising an event in a team, and using the knowledge and skills gained throughout the other units. Other practical outputs are in Esports: Content Creation, where learners produce an end-to-end esports content package, including organising and executing a full day location shoot. In Esports: Business Management learners can pitch a business plan for an esports startup.

Evidence requirements

The units define evidence requirements within the unit specification. These requirements are mandatory.

Three types of evidence may be required:

- knowledge evidence
- product evidence
- performance evidence

The evidence requirements for a unit may involve one, two or all three types of evidence. For example, Esports: Foundations (level 7) requires knowledge and performance evidence; Generative AI (level 7) requires knowledge and product evidence.

The table below summarises the evidence required in each unit at SCQF level 7 within HNC Esports.

Unit code	Unit title	SCQF credit points	Knowledge	Product	Performance
J9K0 47	Esports: Foundations	24	X		X
J9K1 47	Esports: Game Performance	24	X	X	X
J9K5 47	Professional Practice in Esports	24		X	X
J869 47	Data Skills	8		X	
J868 47	Digital Skills	8		X	
J691 47	Emerging Technologies and Experiences	8	X		
J9JV 47	Esports: Broadcasting and Streaming	16	X	X	X

Unit code	Unit title	SCQF credit points	Knowledge	Product	Performance
J9JW 47	Esports: Business Management	16	X	X	
J9JX 47	Esports: Coaching	8	X	X	X
J9JY 47	Esports: Content Creation	16	X	X	X
J9K3 47	Esports: Marketing and Sponsorship	8	X	X	
J9K2 47	Esports: Tournament Organisation	16	X	X	X
J9K4 47	Generative AI	8	X	X	
J68S 47	Network Infrastructure	16	X	X	

Knowledge evidence

This evidence assesses learners' knowledge and understanding. It can take many forms, such as written tests, oral questioning, reports and case studies. This type of evidence normally requires a marking scheme.

Product evidence

This evidence assesses learners' practical abilities. It can take the form of a finished product, such as a computer program, design document or project plan. This type of evidence requires a checklist or rubric to reduce inter-assessor variability in judging the quality of the product.

Performance evidence

This evidence assesses learners' actions and behaviours. It can take the form of a demonstration of practical skills. You judge success by observing and evaluating a learner's performance using a checklist, a rating scale or a rubric. Evidence can be preserved in an audio of visual recording.

In addition to defining the types of evidence, evidence requirements also define the quantity and quality of evidence and the conditions under which it must be produced. How the evidence is generated is not defined.

Tables 3 and 4 provide suitable assessment methods that you can use to help learners meet the evidence requirements. You can find more guidance on each assessment method in the individual unit specifications. The assessment methods included in the tables are only suggestions and we encourage centres to devise their own holistic assessment strategy to meet their learners' needs and context.

Remediation and re-assessment in NextGen: HN Qualifications

Remediation

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify learners' responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. In either case, the assessor must formally note such instances, in writing or as a recording, and make them available to the internal and external verifier.

Remediation is not permitted for closed-book assessments.

The size and structure of the larger NextGen: HN units should mean that the assessor or lecturer is close enough to ongoing assessment activity in project-based units to identify the requirement for remediation as it occurs.

Re-assessment

We must give learners who fail the unit a re-assessment opportunity or, in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. Where we have introduced larger units to the framework, we expect instances of re-assessment to be minimal, due to the approach to assessment and remediation. Where re-assessment is required in a project-based unit, a substantially different project must be used.

Information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The units in this HNC are designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You should consider the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page.

Internal and external verification

You must make sure all assessment methods you use in this qualification are internally verified according to your centre's policies and Qualifications Scotland's guidelines. Information on how to request prior verification for your assessment from Qualifications Scotland is available on our prior verification web page.

Qualifications Scotland carries out external verification to ensure that internal assessment meets the national guidelines for this qualification.

More information on internal and external verification is available in Qualifications Scotland's Guide to Assessment and in NextGen: HN Quality Assurance — Guidance for Centres.

Glossary

Qualifications Scotland credits: 1 Qualifications Scotland credit equals 8 SCQF credit points.

Qualifications Scotland credit value indicates the contribution the unit makes to a Qualifications Scotland qualification. A Qualifications Scotland credit value of 1 represents approximately 40 hours of learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is Scotland's national framework for describing qualifications. We use SCQF terminology in this guide to refer to credits and levels. For more information on the SCQF, visit the SCQF website.

SCQF credit points indicate the amount of learning required to complete a qualification. NextGen HNCs and HNDs are worth 120 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels indicate how hard the qualification is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. NextGen HNCs are at SCQF level 7 and NextGen HNDs are at SCQF level 8.

Information for learners

HNC Esports (SCQF level 7)

This information explains:

- what the qualification is about
- what you should know or be able to do before you start
- what you need to do during the qualification
- opportunities for further learning and employment

Qualification information

HNC Esports equips you with the knowledge, skills, and values to thrive in the esports industry while fostering meta-skills that can be used in many contexts. You gain a solid understanding of the global esports ecosystem, including its business models, ethical challenges, and cultural impact. Through theoretical and practical learning, you acquire technical competences, such as gameplay analysis, event planning, and digital content creation.

Meta-skills are central to your development. Collaborative projects strengthen your ability to work in teams, communicate ideas clearly, and lead under pressure. You improve your critical thinking and problem-solving skills as you analyse trends, evaluate strategies, and adapt to fast-changing scenarios, whether that is optimising team performance or troubleshooting live streams. Your digital fluency will also grow as you engage with industry-standard tools, from streaming software to data analytics platforms. You also enhance your self-awareness and ethical decision-making through reflective tasks. These skills make you adaptable and resilient, ready to go into a dynamic industry.

Sustainability is embedded throughout the qualification, empowering you to become a responsible innovator. You explore the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of esports, learning to align practices with global frameworks like the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This might involve designing

energy-efficient events, advocating for inclusive gaming spaces, or evaluating the lifecycle of gaming hardware.

The qualification aims, related to technical expertise, meta-skills, and sustainability literacy, prepare you for diverse pathways. You might progress to higher education in fields like esports, game design or digital marketing, or enter roles such as event manager, content creator, or esports coach. Those of you wishing to become entrepreneurs will have the tools to launch your own ventures and contribute to digital and green economies.

Administrative information

Published: April 2026 (version 1.0)

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

Please check our website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this unit.

If a unit is revised:

- no new centres can be approved to offer the previous version of the unit
- centres should only enter learners for the previous version of the unit if they can complete it before its finish date

For more information on NextGen: HN Qualifications please visit the NextGen: HN web page.

Thank you to Scotland's colleges: your help developing this qualification was invaluable.