

National 5 Philosophy



Guidance on gathering key evidence for producing estimates in session 2020–21

This document provides subject-level guidance to SQA approved centres on gathering key evidence to support estimates for National 5 Philosophy in session 2020–21. You should read this guidance alongside [National Courses: guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates](#) and the SQA Academy resource, [Quality assurance of estimates for National Courses](#).

This document also includes information on subject-level assessment resources.

Gathering key evidence to produce estimates for National 5 Philosophy

Every year you provide estimates for your candidates. This document and *National Courses: guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates* will give you additional support and guidance to support your decision making for session 2020–21. Evidence should be gathered later in the course, as a realistic reflection of a candidate's attainment. It is important to note that it is not the **quantity** of evidence, but the **quality** of evidence, in relation to its predictive value, that will support you during the estimation process.

The following types of key evidence are likely to provide a good predictive value and may be helpful, although there may be other types of key evidence you feel you would like to use.

Types of key evidence and assessment resources

Key evidence

For National 5 Philosophy in session 2020–21, key evidence only needs to come from the question paper component; there is no requirement for candidates to complete an assignment. However, any assignment evidence you do have for a candidate can still be considered for estimate purposes.

The most robust and predictive evidence for the question paper component is that which has been generated using an assessment that replicates, as far as possible, the standard, duration, format and security of the SQA question paper.

While an assessment of this nature, used towards the end of the academic session and which covers the full course, would be a sufficient piece of key evidence on which to base your estimate, you may wish to supplement this with other evidence. This evidence does not need to be produced on a single occasion.

Other types of evidence relating to the question paper may include combining shorter assessments that have appropriate timings, and that are completed under a high degree of supervision and control, where possible. For example, a shorter assessment that replicates two sections of the question paper, or class tests that cover knowledge and understanding

content from one area once it has been taught. Shorter assessments are likely to be less demanding and have less predictive value than an assessment that more closely matches an SQA question paper. You should take this into account if you are using shorter assessments for estimate purposes.

Assessment resources

Assessment resources that you can use to generate candidate evidence include:

- ◆ questions from SQA past papers and the specimen question paper
- ◆ adapted questions from SQA past papers and the specimen question paper
- ◆ centre-devised assessments that are quality assured to national standards

SQA past papers and the specimen question paper are in the public domain and can be readily accessed by candidates and therefore, in their entirety, do not form suitable assessment tasks. You can, however, extract and adapt questions from these papers for use in centre-devised assessment tasks.

SQA will provide a quality-assured National 5 Philosophy question paper for session 2020–21, which you can use when gathering evidence to support your estimates. There is flexibility in how you may use this resource, such as:

- ◆ as one full assessment conducted under a high degree of supervision and control, where possible
- ◆ as a series of shorter assessments conducted under a high degree of supervision and control, where possible, and with appropriate timings, for example section 1 in 40 minutes and sections 2 and 3 in 50 minutes each
- ◆ to deconstruct and use as appropriate — for example, where you have not been able to cover a content area that is included, you may wish to replace that question with one that is more appropriate and of comparable demand

Please note, this question paper is being provided as an assessment resource and is not mandatory.

Whichever assessment resources you use, you must retain the assessment tasks and marking instructions, along with the candidate evidence, for moderation purposes.

Component 1: question paper

The question paper gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of philosophical positions and theories from across the course.

You should aim to deliver the course as normal, although learning and teaching may be disrupted this session, which will make this more challenging. You are free to decide the timing and depth of delivery of the course content. However, it is important that candidate evidence for estimates samples content from each of the three sections of the course:

- ◆ Arguments in Action
- ◆ Knowledge and Doubt
- ◆ Moral Philosophy

In line with the proposed modifications, sampling **either** Descartes or Hume in the question paper is acceptable in session 2020–21. However, as noted above, we recommend that you deliver the full course content so candidates experience the subject as richly as possible.

The National 5 Philosophy Course Specification explains the skills, knowledge and understanding associated with the question paper in more detail.

Assessment advice

Challenge within the knowledge and understanding element of the question paper is embedded in the types and range of questions across the paper and the marks available for each. Across the whole question paper there should be a mixture of A-type and C-type questions. Approximately 50% of questions should be accessible to C-grade candidates and 30% should be accessible to A-grade candidates.

The distribution of marks can range from 1 to 10 marks and the types of responses expected from candidates will range from multiple-choice to short answers to extended answers. The basic marking principle is 1 mark for a point and an additional mark for a developed point.

It is important that the evidence accurately reflects the mandatory content, as detailed in pages 3 to 8 of the National 5 Philosophy Course Specification. The current content was clarified after the 2019 exam, to give clearer direction and more detail to centres. All questions should be based on this content.

Component 2: assignment

In line with the modifications that were planned for National 5 Philosophy, candidates are not required to complete an assignment for session 2020–21. Therefore, you do not need to consider this component when deciding the final estimated grade for each candidate.

If a candidate has already completed or partially completed their assignment, you can use this as supporting evidence, alongside other key evidence, when carrying out a holistic review of their performance. Candidates tend to perform better in the assignment than the question paper and you should take this into consideration when producing your estimates.

The National 5 Philosophy Course Specification and the Assignment Assessment Task explain in detail the skills, knowledge and understanding associated with the assignment.

Using additional assessment resources for session 2020–21: key information

It is important that you use valid and reliable assessment when gathering evidence to produce estimates for National 5 in session 2020–21.

In National 5 Philosophy, SQA will provide a question paper for session 2020–21, which you can use when gathering evidence to support your estimates. Please note that the marking instructions have not been standardised based on candidate responses. You may therefore need to agree within your centre how to consistently mark an item if a candidate response is not covered by the marking instructions.

The National 5 question paper will only be available on SQA's secure website — you must treat this confidentially, in the same way as other live assessment materials.

You should carefully consider how best to use this material to support candidates, to integrate with your programme of learning, and to help you collate evidence of candidate attainment. Given current public health advice and to maximise learning and teaching time, it is important to stress that there is no expectation that schools and colleges hold a formal diet of prelims for National 5. One of the key reasons for moving to an alternative model was to create additional teaching time through removing the need for prelims and replacing the final examination diet with more flexible classroom-based assessment.

If you use a question paper in part or in its entirety, you should remind candidates that they must not discuss the content of the paper with anyone, including friends, family or on social media.

Understanding the national standard

Examples of candidate responses from the 2018 National 5 question paper, along with associated commentaries, are available on SQA's [Understanding Standards website](#).

The marking instructions for the specimen question paper and past papers detail how marks are allocated for each question type and provide short sample responses that exemplify the allocation of marks.

Assignment candidate exemplars and associated commentaries are also available on the [Understanding Standards website](#).

You may also find the annual course reports, which are published on the [National 5 Philosophy page](#) useful.

Summary

You should base your estimates for National 5 Philosophy on a holistic review of a candidate's performance based on demonstrated attainment of:

- ◆ knowledge and understanding from across the course content
- ◆ responses to the different question types
- ◆ assignment evidence, if available