

# Higher Chemistry

## Subject-specific guidance on gathering key evidence in session 2020–21



Please 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](#).

### Gathering key evidence for Higher Chemistry

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 this process.

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

#### Types of key evidence

The **key pieces** of evidence in Chemistry are:

- ◆ a question paper, covering as much of the course as possible
- ◆ an end-of-course test or top-up question paper that includes the areas of the course not covered in the first question paper
- ◆ end-of-topic tests that include grade A marks, which may be used as supplementary evidence to support the above question papers

You must gather these pieces of evidence in closed-book conditions and under a high degree of supervision and control. The closer the evidence is to the standard, format and duration of the Higher Chemistry question papers the more realistic and reliable your provisional results should be. You should form holistic judgements when considering candidate evidence and give greater weight to the evidence that mirrors the SQA question paper most closely.

## **Question paper**

This assessment should replicate, as closely as possible, the SQA question paper in style, duration, level of demand, and conditions of assessment.

You may need to adjust the cut-off scores you use from notional, so that they are appropriate for your instrument(s) of assessment. Where it is necessary to split the question paper over a number of class sessions, you should raise the cut-off scores to reflect this.

Detailed guidance on question paper construction, level of demand, breakdown of past Higher question papers and guidance on producing evidence and provisional results will be published on the [Chemistry Understanding Standards](#) website in due course.

## **End-of-course test and top-up question paper**

It is important that you have candidate evidence for the entire course. You may need to supplement an initial question paper with an end-of-course test or a top-up question paper. This assessment should sample the knowledge and skills not covered in the main question paper. It should also sample content from the earlier parts of the course. It is important that no questions are repeated between the assessments, as all questions should be unseen.

You should use all the key evidence you gather to help you form a judgement about the provisional result. Your judgement should be holistic rather than focusing only on the piece of key evidence that gives the best grade.

## **End-of-topic tests**

End-of-topic tests, which include questions containing grade A marks, provide useful supplementary evidence. These tests should contain around 30% grade A marks to ensure that they are of an appropriate level of demand.

On their own, end-of-topic tests do not have high predictive value. They tend to focus on specific subject content and test limited knowledge. Their focus is on testing knowledge and understanding rather than skills, and they rarely ask candidates to integrate knowledge and skills. You may need to adjust the cut-off scores you use from notional, so that they are appropriate for your instrument(s) of assessment.

## **Assignment**

The assignment has been removed from the Higher Chemistry course for session 2020–21. You should not include any candidate evidence relating to the assignment when making judgements about your provisional results.

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

It is important that you use valid and reliable assessment when gathering evidence in session 2020–21.

In Higher Chemistry, SQA will provide question papers for session 2020–21. 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 Higher Chemistry question papers will only be available on SQA's secure website — you must treat these confidentially, in the same way as other live assessment materials.

You have the option to use the question papers as internal assessments for gathering candidate evidence. Question papers can be split to support assessments you carry out during class time.

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.