

National Course modification summary: Health and Food Technology



National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher course assessment in session 2020–21

The Deputy First Minister has announced that National 5 exams will not take place in session 2020–21. SQA is working with stakeholders to develop an alternative certification model for National 5 that is based on teacher and lecturer estimates.

At present, Higher and Advanced Higher exams are still planned for 2021 and this will remain under review. We continue to work with stakeholders to put contingency plans in place to respond to any changes in public health advice, or local or national lockdowns, that may result in further changes to the 2021 exam diet — including changes to the timetable.

For up-to-date information on arrangements for National Courses in session 2020–21, including timetable information and guidance on estimates, please visit our website at www.sqa.org.uk/nq2021.

Modifications to assessment

Following our public consultation on proposed modifications to National 5 to Advanced Higher course assessment, which closed on 24 August 2020, we are making changes to course assessment for session 2020–21. The changes detailed on the following pages are intended to support the delivery of learning and teaching, while maintaining the validity, credibility and standard of the courses.

We have published a high-level report on the outcomes of the consultation, which is available from www.sqa.org.uk/nq2021. This includes details of the modifications to National 5 course assessment, which were planned prior to the 2021 National 5 exams being cancelled.

As a result of the modifications, we are exploring the implications for National 3 and National 4 courses, and freestanding units at SCQF levels 5, 6 and 7, in session 2020–21 and will provide further guidance in due course.

- ◆ A large number of comments received from the technical consultation were linked to practical work not being allowed or being very severely restricted this session. For session 2020–21, modifications have been suggested that recognise the reduction in learning and teaching time, time available to collect assessment evidence, and provide opportunities for candidates to acquire practical skills.
- ◆ Concern was expressed about the viability of tasting candidate food for sensory testing, either by the teacher or lecturer, or by others. For session 2020–21, modifications to the Higher Health and Food Technology assignment remove the requirement for sensory testing to take place.
- ◆ A high number of Health and Food Technology feedback comments were linked to the loss of teaching time to deliver all course content. Introduction of optionality into Health

and Food Technology question papers will allow candidates to select questions where they are familiar with the content.

National 5 course assessment 2020–21

There will be no external assessment for National 5 courses in session 2020–21.

Candidates will not be required to sit exams and SQA will not assess coursework.

Instead, we are working with stakeholders to develop an alternative certification model for National 5 that is based on teacher and lecturer estimates.

Centres need to gather evidence of candidates' attainment and use this to determine estimate grades and bands. We have published separate guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates and there is an SQA Academy course available to support teachers and lecturers.

We are also developing subject-specific guidance for teachers and lecturers on gathering evidence and producing estimates. This will include how the previously-intended National 5 modifications could be used to support with gathering evidence and producing estimates in session 2020–21. This guidance will be published from the end of October.

Details of the modifications we had previously intended to make to National 5 course assessment in session 2020–21 are included in our high-level report on the outcomes of the consultation.

To view the high-level report, and to access the guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates, visit www.sqa.org.uk/nq2021.

Higher course assessment 2020–21

| Component | Marks | Scaled marks | Duration |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Component 1: question paper | 50 | not applicable | 2 hours |
| Component 2: assignment | 30 | 50 | Carried out over time |

Component 1: question paper

For session 2020–21, the Higher question paper will have a form of optionality included within it.

Candidates will be required to attempt question 1 of the paper, as it is a mandatory question.

Questions 2, 3, 4 and 5 will become part of an optional section within the paper, where candidates will be required to attempt three out of these four questions.

Due to one less question required to be answered, the total mark of this component will reduce to 50 marks, instead of 60.

Component 2: assignment

Due to the current issues regarding carrying out practical activities in centres, candidates will only complete sections 1 and 2 of the assignment for session 2020–21.

The knowledge and skills currently assessed in sections 3 and 4 (sensory testing and evaluation skills) are assessed in the question paper, ensuring all knowledge and skills are still being assessed, retaining validity and reliability of the course.

In section 1, the number of investigations is being reduced from three to two, which reduces the time that candidates must spend on assessment. The number of justifications for choice of product in section 2 is subsequently reduced from ten to eight, to reflect the lower number of investigations. The requirement to justify choice linked to a cooking method is removed, as is the need to show a link between the two investigations.

For session 2020–21, this makes the assignment out of 30 marks, which will be scaled up to 50 marks to retain the equal weightings of question paper and coursework.

Coursework briefs will be designed with a target group, which that candidates will be able to access easily.

These changes will remove some pressure for teachers and lecturers in the delivery of the course, and allow candidates more time to prepare assessment evidence.

Advanced Higher course assessment 2020–21

| Component | Marks | Duration |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Component 1: question paper | 40 | 2 hours and 30 minutes |
| Component 2: project | 60 | Carried out over time |

Component 1: question paper

For session 2020–21, the Advanced Higher question paper will have a form of optionality included within it.

Candidates will be required to attempt four questions within the paper.

There are two evaluation questions within the paper, and these will become part of an optional section within the paper, where candidates will be required to attempt one out of these two questions. All other questions within the paper will be mandatory.

Due to one less question required to be answered, the total mark of this component will reduce to 40 marks, instead of 50.

These changes will remove some pressure for teachers and lecturers in the delivery of the course, and allow candidates more time to prepare assessment evidence.

Component 2: project

There are no changes being proposed for the Advanced Higher project for session 2020–21.

The Advanced Higher course encourages independent learning and has an emphasis on self-directed study.

Careful consideration has been given to the possible options available. Given the nature and complexities of the Advanced Higher Health and Food Technology course assessment, it is not possible to propose any modifications that would not compromise national standards.

If you have any questions about these changes, please email NQ2020@sqa.org.uk.