

National Course modification summary: Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies



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 in session 2020–21 and will provide further guidance in due course.

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	Duration
Question paper 1 — World Religion and Morality and Belief	60	2 hours and 15 minutes
Question paper 2 — Religious and Philosophical Questions	20	45 minutes

Question paper 1 — World Religion and Morality and Belief

Centres should continue to deliver the course as normal, however the areas listed below from the Morality and Belief section **will not** feature in the question paper for 2021 and so centres will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery, and any internal assessment of these sub-topics.

Section 2: Morality and Belief

Part A: Morality and Justice

◆ Purposes of punishment:

- reformation
- retribution
- protection
- deterrence

Part B: Morality and Relationships

◆ Marriage:

- arranged marriage
- forced marriage
- same-sex marriage
- divorce

Part C: Morality, Environment and Global Issues

◆ **Environmental issues:**

- climate change
- depletion of resources
- biodiversity

Part D: Morality, Medicine and the Human Body

◆ **Use of embryos:**

- reproductive
- therapeutic
- research

Part E: Morality and Conflict

◆ **Modern armaments:**

- weapons of mass destruction
- conventional weapons
- smart weapons

Question paper 2 — Religious and Philosophical Questions

No change.

Assignment

We are removing the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21. We took this decision following a review of consultation feedback.

Removing the assignment removes some pressure in terms of preparation for teachers, lecturers and candidates. This will increase learning and teaching time for the other areas of the course.

Advanced Higher course assessment 2020–21

Component	Marks	Duration
Question paper	90	3 hours
Project–dissertation	50	written up over time

Question paper

For the 2021 question paper, an additional optional essay question will be included in each section. Centres will also be informed of the areas of the course which **will** be assessed in the source questions, which are listed below. This modification will assist teachers in freeing up learning and teaching time while still ensuring the standard of the qualification is maintained.

- ◆ **Philosophy of Religion:** Teleological argument and responses
- ◆ **Religious Experience:** Understandings of religious experience
- ◆ **Medical Ethics:** Beginning of life

Project–dissertation

No change.

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