



National 5  
coursework  
assessment task



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# National 5 Business Management, SCQF Level 5 Assignment Assessment task

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# Introduction

This document contains marking instructions and instructions for candidates for the Business Management National 5 assignment. It must be read in conjunction with the course specification.

This assignment is worth 30 marks. The marks contribute 22% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

This is one of two course assessment components. The other component is a question paper.

# Marking instructions

In line with Qualifications Scotland normal practice, the following marking instructions are addressed to the marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for course assessment.

Candidate evidence will be submitted to Qualifications Scotland for external marking.

## General marking principles

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles that must be applied when marking candidate responses in this assignment. These principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- a Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking instructions for this assessment.
- b Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.
- c There is a penalty for exceeding the word count of 1,300 words by more than 10%.
- d Candidates are awarded marks for demonstrating specific skills, knowledge and understanding when producing their report:

### **Background information (4 marks)**

Marks are awarded for stating the topic area and the organisation, and giving some background information on the organisation.

### **Research methods and sources (6 marks)**

Marks are awarded for stating the reason for choosing each research source and explaining the value of sources used.

### **Findings, analysis and interpretation (12 marks)**

Marks are awarded for giving findings, and for the analysis and interpretation of the findings.

### **Conclusion(s)/recommendation(s) (6 marks)**

Marks are awarded for drawing appropriate justified conclusions and/or justified recommendations from the research findings.

### **Collating and reporting (2 marks)**

Marks are awarded for using appropriate headings and fonts/sizes, and making good use of display materials.

## Marking overview

Section 1	4 marks	3 marks	1 to 2 marks	0 marks
<b>Background information</b>	The purpose of the report is clearly stated.	The purpose of the report may or may not be stated.	The purpose of the report may or may not be stated.	The purpose of the report is unclear/not stated.
	Detailed background information on the organisation is provided.	Some background information on the organisation is provided.	Limited background information on the organisation is provided.	No background information on the organisation is provided.
Section 2	5 to 6 marks	3 to 4 marks	1 to 2 marks	0 marks
<b>Research methods and sources</b>	The reasons for choosing research methods and/or sources are stated.	The reasons for choosing research methods and/or sources are stated.	The reasons for choosing limited research methods and/or sources are stated.	No reasons are evident and no explanations are given.
	The value of each method and/or source is explained.	The value of each method and/or source is explained.	Limited explanation of the value of each method and/or source.	
	At least two sources must be used to gain full marks.	At least one source must be used.	At least one source must be used.	
Section 3	9 to 12 marks	5 to 8 marks	1 to 4 marks	0 marks
<b>Findings, analysis and interpretation</b>	A variety of relevant findings are stated.	Some relevant findings are stated.	Limited relevant findings are stated.	No relevant findings are stated.
	A variety of analytical and/or interpretative points are given, based on the findings.	Some analytical and/or interpretative points are given, based on the findings.	Limited analytical and/or interpretative points are given, based on the findings.	No analytical and/or interpretative points are given.

<b>Section 4</b>	<b>5 to 6 marks</b>	<b>3 to 4 marks</b>	<b>1 to 2 marks</b>	<b>0 marks</b>
<b>Conclusion(s)/ recommendation(s)</b>	Several justified conclusions are drawn and/or justified recommendations are made. They are supported by evidence from within the report.	Some justified conclusions are drawn and/or justified recommendations are made. They are supported by evidence from within the report.	Few justified conclusions are drawn and/or justified recommendations are made. They are supported by evidence from within the report.	No justified conclusions are drawn and/or justified recommendations made.
<b>Section 5</b>		<b>2 marks</b>	<b>1 mark</b>	<b>0 marks</b>
<b>Collating and reporting</b>		Section headings are correct.  <b>And</b>  Good use is made of display materials.	Section headings are correct.  <b>Or</b>  Good use is made of display materials.	Section headings are not used.  <b>And</b>  Minimal display material has been used.

## Detailed marking instructions

Section 1	Marking instructions	Max mark	Additional guidance
<b>Background information</b>	<p>Award <b>1 mark</b> for a clear statement of the purpose of the report and the organisation chosen.</p> <p>Award up to <b>3 marks</b> for background information on the organisation.</p> <p>Award a <b>maximum of 3 marks</b> if no purpose is stated.</p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p>The <b>purpose</b> of the report is clearly stated, for example:</p> <p><i>I am investigating the promotion methods of XXX.</i> (1P – 1 mark awarded for purpose).</p> <p><b>Background information</b> must be based on three of the following to gain all 3 marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <i>a brief history of the organisation, for example establishment (where and when, whom and when, where and whom), changes to ownership</i></li> <li>◆ <i>structure of the organisation, for example number of workers, sector of industry, sector of economy</i></li> <li>◆ <i>target market</i></li> <li>◆ <i>location, for example number of branches and/or individual locations</i></li> <li>◆ <i>product/service, for example range</i></li> <li>◆ <i>operational activities, for example production methods, opening hours</i></li> <li>◆ <i>any other suitable background, for example mission statement, awards</i></li> </ul> <p>If candidates use sub-headings in this section, award marks only for correct points under these headings.</p>

Section 2	Marking instructions	Max mark	Additional guidance
<p><b>Research methods and sources</b></p>	<p>Award <b>1 mark</b> where a reason for using each research method/source is stated, <b>up to a maximum of 3 marks</b>.</p> <p>Award <b>1 mark</b> where the value, for example strengths and/or weaknesses, of the research method/source is explained.</p> <p>Further marks may be awarded for the development of a relevant point, including an example.</p> <p>At least two research methods/sources must be explained. Award a <b>maximum of 5 marks</b> if only one research method/source is used.</p> <p>No marks are awarded for only identifying the research methods/sources used.</p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<p>Example of a reason:</p> <p><i>I used the XXX website (see appendix 1) to find out information about the range of products that the business sells (1P – 1 mark awarded for purpose/reason).</i></p> <p>Example of an explained value:</p> <p><i>This information is up to date because the website was last updated two months ago (1V – 1 mark awarded for value).</i></p> <p>If values are only listed rather than explained, for example reliable, up to date, bias, relevant, and quick, no marks are awarded.</p> <p>Some examples of research methods/sources that candidates may use are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ surveys/questionnaires/interviews</li> <li>◆ websites</li> <li>◆ newspapers/magazines/books</li> <li>◆ audio/visual media</li> <li>◆ field trips or visiting speakers</li> </ul>

Section 3	Marking instructions	Max mark	Additional guidance
<p><b>Findings, analysis and interpretation</b></p>	<p>Award <b>1 mark</b> for each relevant, referenced finding stated, <b>up to a maximum of 6 marks</b>.</p> <p>Award <b>1 mark</b> for each analytical and/or interpretative point and development.</p> <p>Award <b>up to 3 marks</b> for the analysis and/or interpretation of any one referenced finding, <i>for example</i> one finding, plus two of any of analysis/ interpretation/development.</p> <p>The same or similar finding from different sources can gain ‘finding’ marks, but the analysis from each finding must differ.</p> <p>Where a candidate has gained the maximum 6 marks for findings, further marks can be awarded for any analysis/development of the seventh and subsequent finding.</p>	<p><b>12</b></p>	<p>Candidates must make their findings and analytical and interpretative points from their research, displays, graphs and charts, etc.</p> <p>For example:</p> <p><i>TripAdvisor (see appendix 1) showed that 40% of people thought that XXX had poor quality staff (1F – 1 mark awarded for finding).</i></p> <p><i>This means that XXX is not good at recruiting and selecting the right people (1A – 1 mark awarded for analysis).</i></p> <p><i>My survey (see appendix 2) said that 50% of people thought that there was poor quality staff at XX (1F – 1 mark awarded for finding).</i></p> <p><i>This could be because of poor staff training, (1A – 1 mark awarded for analysis) or it might be due to the untidy appearance of the shop assistants (1A – 1 mark awarded for analysis).</i></p> <p><i>The impact of this is that customers may go to competitors. (0 marks, as maximum marks have been awarded from one finding)</i></p> <p>Where candidates state generic points from listing relevant theory, for example material from a textbook (1GF – 1 mark maximum awarded for generic findings).</p>

Section 4	Marking instructions	Max mark	Additional guidance
<p><b>Conclusion(s)/ recommendation(s)</b></p>	<p>Award <b>1 mark</b> for each justified conclusion drawn and/or justified recommendation made.</p> <p>Award <b>1 mark</b> for each development/impact of a conclusion and/or recommendation.</p> <p>At least two justified conclusions and/or justified recommendations are needed to gain full marks.</p> <p>Conclusions/recommendations must be linked to evidence in the ‘findings, analysis and interpretation’ section. Award a <b>maximum of 1 mark across the whole section</b> if conclusions/recommendations are not linked or justified.</p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<p>Example of a <b>conclusion</b>:</p> <p><i>I conclude that people are happy with the current level of customer service because the results from my questionnaire confirm this (1C – 1 mark awarded for conclusion).</i></p> <p>Example of a <b>recommendation</b>:</p> <p><i>I recommend that XXX lengthens its opening hours to close at 6 pm because there are a lot of people going home from work at that time who might buy a product (1R – 1 mark awarded for recommendation). This should increase the sales revenue of XXX (1D – 1 mark awarded for development/impact of recommendation).</i></p>

Section 5	Marking instructions	Max mark	Additional guidance
<b>Collating and reporting</b>	<p>Award <b>1 mark</b> for appropriate and consistent use of correct headings.</p> <p>Award <b>1 mark</b> for appropriate use of at least two display materials.</p>	<b>2</b>	<p>A clearly displayed report should have the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ appropriate use of headings (1H – 1 mark awarded for heading)</li> <li>◆ at least two different display materials, eg charts, graphs, diagrams, pictures, tables, maps, logos (1D – 1 mark awarded for display)</li> </ul> <p><b>Do not</b> award the display materials mark if there is repetition, eg a candidate gives two identical logos, and nothing else.</p>

# Instructions for candidates

This assessment applies to the assignment for National 5 Business Management.

This assignment is worth 30 marks. The marks contribute 22% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

It assesses the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ selecting an appropriate business topic
- ◆ researching and gathering suitable business data/information/evidence relating to the context of the topic, from a range of sources
- ◆ applying knowledge and understanding of business concepts to explain and analyse the key features of the topic
- ◆ drawing valid conclusions and/or recommendations to make informed business judgements and/or decisions
- ◆ producing an appropriately formatted business report suitable for the purpose, intended audience and context of the assignment

Your teacher or lecturer will let you know how the assessment will be carried out and any required conditions for doing it.

In this assessment, you have to carry out research and write a report on a business topic of your choice. Your report should be written for the organisation owner/manager of the organisation.

The report must be no more than **1,300 words** and should follow the section headings provided. If you exceed the word count of 1,300 words by more than 10%, a marking penalty will be applied.

You are allowed a maximum of two A4-sized pages of appendices (which **do not** count towards the 1,300 words).

You must give brief details of each research source. This can be done in the body of the report or as an appendix at the end.

Although you have a notional 5 hours in class to research and write up your report, you may carry out field research outwith the classroom in addition to this.

## Preparing your report

Use the following instructions to prepare your report. The tick boxes can help ensure you complete each section.

You may wish to use the 'National 5 Business Management – assignment notes' to help you prepare your report, but this is optional. There is an example at the

end of this document and on Qualifications Scotland’s website under the ‘Coursework’ tab.

You must submit your report using the National 5 Business Management template. Your teacher or lecturer will provide you with this.

### Section 1: background information (4 marks)

- ◆ State the organisation and the purpose of your report.
- ◆ Provide at least three pieces of background information on your organisation.

	✓
Organisation and purpose	
Background information	
Background information	
Background information	

### Section 2: research methods and sources (6 marks)

Find at least two different sources of information for your topic. Sources may include websites, newspapers, magazines, books, interviews, surveys, questionnaires, visiting speakers, field trips, etc. You must give brief details of each source, eg URLs, in the body of the report or as an appendix.

Most information required for your report can be found on organisations’ websites and from the other sources listed above. It is not necessary to contact an organisation as part of your research.

- ◆ State the reason for looking up each source.
- ◆ Explain the value of each source to your topic.

		✓		✓
Source 1	Reason		Value	
Source 2	Reason		Value	
Source 3	Reason		Value	

If only two sources are used, you must provide two values for each to gain full marks.

		✓		✓		✓
Source 1	Reason		Value		Value	
Source 2	Reason		Value		Value	

### Section 3: findings, analysis and interpretation (12 marks)

- ◆ State relevant findings. Remember that you must give brief details of the source of each finding, eg URLs, in the body of the report or in an appendix.
- ◆ Give point(s) of analysis and/or interpretation for each finding.

**Note:** you can give up to two points of analysis/interpretation for each finding.

	How many in your report?
Findings	
Analysis/interpretation point(s)	
<b>Total</b>	

### Section 4: conclusion(s)/recommendation(s) (6 marks)

- ◆ Draw conclusions, justifying why you are drawing them and/or make recommendations, justifying why you are able to make them.

**Note:** your conclusions and/or recommendations must be based on points you have already made in the ‘findings, analysis and interpretation’ section.

	✓
Justified conclusion/recommendation 1	
Justified conclusion/recommendation 2	
Justified conclusion/recommendation 3	
Justified conclusion/recommendation 4	
Justified conclusion/recommendation 5	
Justified conclusion/recommendation 6	

## Section 5: collating and reporting (2 marks)

- ◆ Use the headings from sections 1-4 for your report.
- ◆ Use a minimum of two different display materials, eg charts, graphs, images diagrams, pictures, tables, maps, logos.

	✓
Headings	
Display material 1	
Display material 2	

You should:

- ◆ use 1.5 line spacing
- ◆ use a readable, clear font
- ◆ use a font size of 12
- ◆ check that all page footers are numbered
- ◆ insert your SCN in the template footer
- ◆ insert your report title in the template header
- ◆ staple your pages together

## National 5 Business Management – assignment notes

You can use this to record your research and analysis, and to help you prepare your final report. If you need additional space, you can add more rows to any of the tables. You can download a copy from Qualifications Scotland’s website under the ‘Coursework’ tab.

### Background information (4 marks)

	Notes
Organisation and purpose	
Background information	
Background information	
Background information	

### Research methods and sources and (6 marks)

Brief details of source	Reason for choosing	Value(s) of information

### Findings, analysis and interpretation (12 marks)

Source	Findings	Analysis and/or interpretation point(s): (eg this shows that ... this means that ... this suggests that ... this leads to ... therefore ... the impact is ...)

**Conclusion(s) and recommendation(s) (6 marks)**

Conclusion/recommendation	Justification

**Presentation and structure (2 marks)**

	✓
Headings	
Display material 1	
Display material 2	

**Recommended style (0 marks)**

	✓
Report title	
1.5 line spacing	
Readable, clear font	
Font size 12	
Page footers numbered	
SCN inserted	
Stapled	

# Administrative information

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## History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	<p>Amendments made to sections 2, 4 and 5 of the marking instructions. Candidates can now be awarded up to 5 marks if they only use one source. Using the correct font and size is now only a recommendation.</p> <p>Instructions for candidates updated to reflect the above and to clarify notional hours for research and report writing.</p>	September 2018
2.1	Minor amendments made to the 'Instructions for candidates' section.	September 2019
2.2	Minor amendments made to section 1 and section 2 of the 'Additional guidance' column in the 'Detailed marking instructions'.	August 2022
2.3	Minor change to 'Background information' in the 'Detailed marking instructions' section (amendment to the example in additional guidance).	July 2023
2.4	<p>Minor amendments made to section 1 and section 2 of the 'Additional guidance' column in the 'Detailed marking instructions'.</p> <p><b>What you need to do differently</b> You will need to check, and potentially update, your notes for the 'Introduction and research' section.</p> <p>Make sure you use the most-up-to-date version of this specimen coursework assessment task's marking instructions to reflect changes noted above.</p>	September 2025
3.0	<p>We've amended the percentage weighting for the assignment by introducing scaling.</p> <p>We've changed references to 'SQA' to 'Qualifications Scotland' throughout. We've updated the title to include the SCQF level.</p> <p>We've made changes to the format and layout of the document to improve accessibility.</p> <p><b>What you need to do differently</b> You must update your teaching notes and assessments.</p>	June 2026

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