



National 5  
course  
specification



# National 5 Practical Cookery, SCQF Level 5 Course Specification

<b>Course code:</b>	C885 75
<b>Course assessment code:</b>	X885 75
<b>SCQF:</b>	level 5 (24 SCQF credit points)
<b>Valid from:</b>	session 2026–2027

This document provides detailed information about the course and course assessment to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the course and the course assessment in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed.

This document is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver the course.

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# Course overview

The course consists of 24 SCQF credit points which includes time for preparation for course assessment. The notional length of time for a candidate to complete the course is 160 hours.

The course assessment has two components.

Component	Marks	Duration
Component 1: question paper	35	1 hour
Component 2: practical activity	65	See course assessment section

Recommended entry	Progression
<p>Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre.</p> <p>Candidates should have achieved the fourth curriculum level or the National 4 Practical Cookery course or equivalent qualifications and/or experience prior to starting this course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ other qualifications in related areas</li><li>◆ further study, employment or training</li></ul>

## Conditions of award

The grade awarded is based on the total marks achieved across both course assessment components.

## Course rationale

National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

Every course provides opportunities for candidates to develop breadth, challenge and application. The focus and balance of assessment is tailored to each subject area.

This course builds on the relevant experiences and outcomes for the technologies and health and wellbeing curriculum areas. It enables candidates to participate in engaging, motivating learning experiences; to develop practical cookery-related knowledge, understanding and skills; and helps candidates use their skills at home, in the wider community and in employment.

This course enables candidates to develop skills by participating in a range of practical cookery lessons. Throughout this course, candidates also strengthen time management and organisational skills. This course also allows candidates the opportunity to build an understanding of ingredients, including their production, characteristics and use.

This course places a strong emphasis on developing practical skills and applying those skills. The assessment approaches are proportionate, fit for purpose and promote best practice, ensuring that candidates are supported to achieve the highest standards possible.

This course provides candidates with meaningful opportunities to further develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, which include aspects of numeracy and thinking skills.

## Purpose and aims

This course aims to develop candidates' life skills and enhance their transferable skills in practical cookery and provide relevant knowledge and experience for those who wish to progress to further study in the professional cookery industry. By preparing candidates for independent living, this course anticipates their future needs by enabling them to plan, prepare and cook food for themselves and others. It also builds on organisational skills, which are transferable to a wide range of contexts.

This course aims to enable candidates to:

- ◆ develop practical cookery skills, food preparation techniques and cookery processes and apply in them in a range of contexts.
- ◆ select and use ingredients to prepare, garnish or decorate dishes
- ◆ develop an understanding of the characteristics of ingredients and an awareness of their sustainability
- ◆ develop an understanding of current dietary advice in relation to the selection and use of ingredients
- ◆ develop an understanding of allergens in food
- ◆ plan, produce and present dishes to an appropriate standard

- ◆ work in a safe and hygienic manner

This course has a strong emphasis on the practical component, enabling candidates to gain understanding by carrying out practical activities alongside the supporting theory.

## **Who is this course for?**

This course is intended for candidates with an interest in food and developing their practical cookery skills. It provides the opportunity to utilise skills and knowledge developed at home, in the community or as preparation for a career in the hospitality industry.

This course is designed to meet the needs of candidates, recognising that they progress in different ways at different paces. There is no prescribed mode or duration of delivery, giving centres the flexibility to use a variety of teaching approaches and draw on a range of resources to support delivery.

# Course content

This course, which is practical and experiential in nature, enables candidates to develop a wide range of cookery skills and food preparation techniques, as well as planning, organisational and time management skills when producing a variety of dishes in a practical cookery context.

Planning, organisational and time management skills are strengthened by following recipes and time plans, and by producing and costing a range of dishes.

There is a strong emphasis on safety and hygiene. Candidates learn the importance of always following safe and hygienic practices when preparing food and the need for consistent and safe practices in all cookery environments.

Candidates enhance their practical cookery skills, food preparation techniques and knowledge of controlling cookery processes and will be able to effectively evaluate the dishes they prepare.

Knowledge and understanding will centre on ingredients and their properties, including common allergens, alongside the importance of sustainability, responsible sourcing, and current dietary guidance.

This course also develops thinking skills, including remembering, understanding, and applying, as well as a range of key numeracy skills.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding

### Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course

The following provides a broad overview of the subject skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the course:

- ◆ using food preparation techniques and cookery processes to produce, portion and present dishes appropriately
- ◆ understanding and demonstrating knowledge of the importance of food safety and applying this in practical contexts
- ◆ selecting, weighing, and measuring ingredients correctly to prepare dishes
- ◆ using appropriate ingredients to prepare and garnish or decorate dishes
- ◆ understanding and demonstrating knowledge of the characteristics of a range of ingredients, and their function in a practical context
- ◆ understanding and demonstrating knowledge of the importance of sourcing sustainable ingredients
- ◆ understanding and demonstrating knowledge of food allergens
- ◆ understanding and demonstrating knowledge of current dietary advice related to the use of ingredients

- ◆ following recipes to prepare, produce, portion and present dishes appropriately and evaluating the final product
- ◆ developing planning, costing, organisational and time management skills in a practical cookery context

## **Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment**

The following provides details of skills, knowledge and understanding sampled in the course assessment.

### **Question paper**

The purpose of the question paper is to assess the breadth of knowledge the candidate has gained across the course, the depth of their understanding, and their ability to apply this knowledge and understanding when answering appropriately challenging questions.

### **Practical activity**

The purpose of the practical activity is to assess candidates' ability to apply knowledge and skills gained throughout the course to present a three-course meal to a given specification. They are required to follow an appropriate time plan to support the organisation and sequencing of their work. The practical activity will assess skills in food preparation techniques, cookery processes and serving of the finished dishes within the agreed time frame, while following safe and hygienic practices.

### **Question paper and practical activity**

Both course components require candidates to clearly demonstrate application of knowledge and skills, at an appropriate level, related to the course content, as defined in the list below.

### **Kitchen equipment**

Vegetable knife; cook's knife; palette knife; blender; peeler; grater; sieve; colander; whisk; rolling pin; a range of cutters; pastry brush; spatula; piping bag and nozzles; a range of bakeware and cookware.

### **Weighing and measuring equipment**

- ◆ scales
- ◆ measuring jug
- ◆ measuring spoons

### **Food preparation techniques**

Peel; skin; chop; slice; dice; cut matchsticks; cut batons; finely chop, finely dice, finely slice, segment; blanch; puree; marinate; strain; pass; grate; coat; mix; blend; whisk; cream; fold; rub in; knead; roll out; portion; shape; line; bake blind; glaze; pipe; and other appropriate skills associated with ingredients and/or recipes.

## **Cookery processes**

The underlying principles and application of the following cookery processes:

- ◆ baking
- ◆ boiling
- ◆ grilling
- ◆ poaching
- ◆ shallow frying
- ◆ stir-frying
- ◆ steaming
- ◆ stewing
- ◆ simmering
- ◆ sauté
- ◆ sweat

Current dietary advice relating to these cookery processes.

## **Categories of ingredients**

- ◆ herbs, spices, flavourings and seasonings
- ◆ dry ingredients
- ◆ fruit and vegetables
- ◆ meat or meat alternatives
- ◆ poultry or poultry alternatives
- ◆ dairy products or dairy alternatives
- ◆ fish or seafood
- ◆ eggs

## **Understanding ingredients**

- ◆ characteristics of ingredients
  - could include the origin of the ingredient, its use in cooking, links to traditional dishes, appearance or taste of the ingredient
- ◆ current dietary advice relating to the selection and use of ingredients
- ◆ the importance of sourcing sustainable ingredients
- ◆ safe storage and preparation of ingredients to reduce hazards and eliminate cross-contamination
- ◆ understanding and demonstrating knowledge of food allergens

## **Preparing, cooking and finishing dishes**

- ◆ carrying out a costing exercise
- ◆ requisitioning equipment
- ◆ following a time plan to prepare and serve dishes
- ◆ controlling the cookery processes and testing food for readiness
- ◆ tasting and seasoning where necessary

- ◆ presenting the dishes appropriately, with garnishes and decorations prepared using specialist techniques

### **Serving dishes**

- ◆ service details of finished dishes
- ◆ portioning the dishes consistently according to recipes
- ◆ selecting appropriate serving dishes or plates
- ◆ ensuring the correct temperature and cleanliness of the serving dishes or plates
- ◆ adhering to the service times
- ◆ evaluating the finished product

### **Food hygiene and safety**

- ◆ understanding the principles of food safety and hygiene
- ◆ observing personal hygiene and kitchen hygiene
- ◆ using equipment safely and hygienically
- ◆ preparing, storing and serving food safely and hygienically
- ◆ working in a safe and organised manner

Skills, knowledge and understanding included in the course are appropriate to the SCQF level of the course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk)).

# Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

This course helps candidates to develop broad, generic skills. These skills are based on the [Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work framework](#) and draw from the following main skills areas:

## 2 Numeracy

2.2 Money, time and measurement

## 4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

4.1 Employability

## 5 Thinking skills

5.1 Remembering

5.2 Understanding

5.3 Applying

These skills must be built into the course where there are appropriate opportunities and the level should be appropriate to the level of the course.

Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the course support notes.

## Learning for Sustainability

Qualifications Scotland is committed to identifying opportunities to develop the values, skills, knowledge and understanding of Learning for Sustainability within all National Courses.

# Course assessment

Course assessment is based on the information provided in this document.

The course assessment meets the key purposes and aims of the course by addressing:

- ◆ breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the course
- ◆ challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- ◆ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This enables candidates to:

- ◆ integrate and apply knowledge, understanding and skills from across the course
- ◆ apply the knowledge, understanding and skills from across the course through a practical approach

The candidates are assessed by a combination of a question paper and a practical activity. Together they add breadth, challenge and application to the course as the candidates integrate, extend and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding they have learned during the course.

# Course assessment structure: question paper

## Question paper

**35 marks**

The purpose of this question paper is to assess the candidates' ability to integrate and apply breadth, knowledge, understanding and skills from across the course. The question paper will ask candidates to state, name, give, identify, describe, explain, calculate and evaluate.

This question paper gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the following knowledge, understanding and skills:

- ◆ the principles of selecting and using food preparation equipment
- ◆ the principles of successful weighing and measuring
- ◆ understanding cookery processes and food preparation techniques
- ◆ understanding ingredients, their characteristics, allergens and the importance of sustainability
- ◆ knowledge and application of current dietary advice
- ◆ knowledge of the application of the principles of food safety and hygiene
- ◆ costing recipes
- ◆ evaluation skills
- ◆ following a time plan
- ◆ service details

The question paper has a total mark allocation of 35 marks. This is 35% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

## Setting, conducting and marking the question paper

This question paper will be set and marked by Qualifications Scotland and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by Qualifications Scotland. Candidates will complete this question paper in 1 hour.

Specimen question papers for National 5 courses are published on Qualification Scotland's website. These illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the question papers candidates sit. The specimen papers also include marking instructions.

# Course assessment structure: practical activity

## Practical activity

**65 marks**

The purpose of the practical activity is to assess the candidate's ability to apply knowledge and skills gained throughout the course. Candidates will work independently following a plan of work to produce and serve a three-course meal from a given set of recipes, safely and hygienically.

Each year, Qualifications Scotland will issue the coursework assessment task, which will contain specific recipes for the three dishes to be produced.

The practical activity gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding in the context of producing and serving the meal:

- ◆ organisational and time management skills
- ◆ applying food preparation techniques and cookery processes according to the provided recipes
- ◆ preparing and using ingredients according to the provided recipes
- ◆ presenting and serving each dish appropriately
- ◆ demonstrating the importance of food safety and hygiene and working in a safe and hygienic manner

The practical activity has a total mark allocation of 65 marks. This is 65% of the overall marks for course assessment.

## Coursework overview

Candidates with special dietary requirements may substitute alternative ingredients when preparing dishes for the meal. This can be arranged in advance by contacting Qualifications Scotland. Details of the appropriate contact can be found in the instruction for centres, which are published annually on our secure website.

### Practical activity (65 marks)

- ◆ 50 marks are available for preparing, cooking and serving the three-course meal.
- ◆ 15 marks are available for professional practice.

### Prior to the start of the practical activity, candidates may:

- ◆ set up their personal work area with the required equipment and ingredients
- ◆ weigh and measure the specified ingredients. Any ingredient that has a **prepared weight** must be weighed and measured **during** the practical activity.
- ◆ prepare raw ingredients as identified in the ingredients list of the recipes.
- ◆ prepare garnishes and decorations that are **not** required to be made as part of the assessment.

During the assessment the teacher or lecturer may give time prompts every 30 minutes, and 5 minutes before each service time.

## **Service requirements**

Dishes should be served as follows:

Starter:	2 hours after the start of the assessment
Main course:	2 hours and 15 minutes after the start of the assessment
Dessert:	2 hours and 25 minutes after the start of the assessment

Dishes may be presented 5 minutes before or after the service time. If a candidate serves a dish more than 5 minutes early, they can still be awarded marks allocated to 'service' but marking must take place at the correct service time. If a candidate serves a dish more than 5 minutes late, or after the end of the practical activity, no marks can be awarded for 'service'. The candidate would retain any marks already awarded for the preparation and cooking of the dish. If a dish has more than one component, all components must be served in correct quantities, in order to access the service marks.

A separate area, away from the candidate workstation, but in the same classroom should be set aside for candidates to serve their completed dishes from the practical activity.

## **Setting, conducting and marking the practical activity**

The practical activity is set by Qualifications Scotland on an annual basis and conducted under direct supervision and control.

The practical activity is internally marked and quality assured by centre staff in line with Qualifications Scotland marking instructions.

All marking is quality assured by Qualifications Scotland.

## **Assessment conditions**

### **Time**

Candidates should undertake the assessment at an appropriate point in the course and after the coursework assessment task has been published. This is normally when they have developed the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding gained while working through the course.

The practical activity should be undertaken in the allocated time of 2 hours and 30 minutes.

### **Supervision, control and authentication**

Candidates are permitted to practise the individual dishes once before completing the practical activity. The complete practical activity must only be carried out once — on the day of their assessment.

Candidates should have access to the recipes only for assessment purposes. They are only permitted to view the recipes on these three occasions:

- 1 during the initial practice of each individual recipe
- 2 for a read over in conjunction with the time plan prior to carrying out the practical activity
- 3 on the day of the practical activity

Candidates must complete the assessment under the direct supervision of a teacher or lecturer. Candidates must not communicate with each other during the assessment.

No other members of staff, other than the assessor, internal verifier or a member of Qualifications Scotland verification team should be allowed access to the practical assessment area for the duration of the practical activity.

Candidates must not use mobile phones at any point during the practical activity. This restriction applies throughout the entire session, including the preparation period and the tidying-up time at the end of the practical activity.

Under no circumstances should any part of the practical activity be shared or discussed on social media, including photographs of the finished dishes.

During the practical activity, a maximum of eight candidates can be assessed at any one time, unless the centre is selected for verification, when only a maximum of six candidates will be assessed.

If a centre is selected for verification, then the cohort selected for this must be the first candidates to be assessed for the practical activity in the centre.

## **Resources**

The practical activity coursework assessment task for each session, will be available for teachers and lecturers to download from Qualifications Scotland's secure website. Centres will be notified when the materials have been published. This includes both instructions for centres and instructions for candidates.

Candidates should have access to the instructions for candidates document and time plan, as well as all ingredients and equipment required to enable them to complete the practical activity.

## **Reasonable assistance**

Candidates must complete the practical activity independently; this should be made clear to them. The teacher or lecturer can answer questions from candidates about accessing further ingredients and/or equipment. The teacher or lecturer may intervene to ensure that the safety of the candidates and others is not compromised.

If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment, or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

## **Evidence to be gathered**

The following evidence is required for this assessment:

- ◆ the completed dishes
- ◆ the completed recording table
- ◆ the completed practical activity assessment record

# Grading

Candidates' overall grades are determined by their performance across the course assessment. The course assessment is graded A–D on the basis of the total mark for all course assessment components.

## **Grade description for C**

For the award of grade C, candidates will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

## **Grade description for A**

For the award of grade A, candidates will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

# Equality and inclusion

This course is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible.

Qualifications Scotland's [equality of access to qualifications policy](#) outlines our commitment to:

- ◆ the Equality Act 2010
- ◆ anti-racist education
- ◆ protecting children's rights
- ◆ corporate parenting

You must consider the needs of individual candidates when planning learning experiences, designing learning resources, or choosing texts.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and those with additional support needs is available on the [assessment arrangements web page](#).

# Further information

- ◆ [Assessment arrangements](#)
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 3–5](#)
- ◆ [Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ [Recent Qualifications Scotland research](#)
- ◆ [Remote assessment](#)
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook](#)
- ◆ [Know Your SCQF Level — Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework](#)
- ◆ [Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work framework](#)

# Appendix: course support notes

## Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance to teachers and lecturers on approaches to delivering the course. They should be read in conjunction with this course specification and the specimen question paper and/or coursework.

## Approaches to learning and teaching

Learning and teaching approaches should be candidate-centred, participative and practical in nature. There should be an appropriate balance between whole-class teaching and activity-based learning, with an activity approach being used to enable candidates to develop all the relevant skills effectively. The underpinning knowledge should be integrated with practical activities and placed in the context of those activities.

Teaching strategies should enable candidates to:

- ◆ learn progressively more independently
- ◆ work co-operatively and assume shared responsibility
- ◆ work within given deadlines
- ◆ acquire and extend application of cookery-related knowledge, understanding and skills
- ◆ be involved in self- and peer-evaluation activities
- ◆ adopt a positive attitude to, and take pride in, their work
- ◆ make links with their existing knowledge and experience both within cookery contexts and across the curriculum

## Delivery

There are different ways to deliver the course. Whichever approach is taken, safety and hygiene must underpin the whole course. To be effective, it should be integrated into all cookery activities.

Learning and teaching is more effective if teachers and lecturers use different learning and teaching strategies to allow for different learning styles. Tasks and levels of support given should be tailored to meet individual candidates' needs, using an appropriate balance of teaching methodologies.

Practical learning and teaching approaches that offer opportunities for personalisation and choice can help motivate and challenge candidates. This can be supported by allowing candidates to choose, for example:

- ◆ the recipes they prepare
- ◆ the ingredients they use for garnishes and decorations
- ◆ the methods they use to gather and present information

Throughout this course, teachers and lecturers can use resources such as visual media, online cookery content, and visits to local or national food events to engage and inspire candidates.

Digital technologies can be a very useful tool in supporting learning and teaching and should be used in creative and innovative ways. Teachers and lecturers could, for example, encourage candidates to carry out online research and present their findings using a variety of digital tools. Using e-portfolios could facilitate personalisation and authenticate research carried out in candidates' own time. Recording devices may also be used to capture candidates' cookery-related activities

Centres should provide a variety of practical tasks to ensure candidates experience both challenge and enjoyment across different food-related contexts. The food preparation techniques and cookery processes used should be selected from those listed in the course specification.

**The table below suggests some activities which could support course delivery**

Course aims	Suggested learning activities
Proficiently use a range of cookery skills, food preparation techniques and cookery processes when following recipes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ demonstrations to show the use of ingredients, and a range of techniques and processes when preparing dishes</li> <li>◆ TV programmes or online cookery content to reinforce demonstrations and introduce new recipes</li> <li>◆ practical cookery sessions to practise and consolidate skills</li> <li>◆ worksheets on equipment, techniques, ingredients, processes</li> <li>◆ matching activities linking equipment to food preparation techniques</li> <li>◆ group tasks to demonstrate processes and techniques in the production of dishes</li> <li>◆ demonstrations by visiting chefs</li> <li>◆ chef of the day activities to encourage engagement and responsibility</li> <li>◆ demonstrations on weighing and measuring, food preparation techniques and cookery processes, followed by monitoring candidate performance</li> <li>◆ links with Further Education establishments, restaurants, industry partners</li> <li>◆ visits to local food outlets or cookery shows and exhibitions</li> <li>◆ opportunities to use a variety of equipment appropriate to the techniques, when following different recipes</li> <li>◆ opportunities to apply a variety of cookery processes appropriate to the techniques, when following different recipes</li> <li>◆ self-evaluation and peer-evaluation activities to identify strengths and areas for improvement</li> </ul>
Select and use ingredients to produce and garnish or decorate dishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ magazines, cookery books, and online resources to explore different styles of garnishes and decorations</li> <li>◆ worksheets focusing on ingredients and their use in finishing dishes</li> <li>◆ demonstrations showing how a variety of ingredients can be used to enhance presentation of finished dishes</li> <li>◆ demonstrations of a range of garnishing decorating techniques</li> <li>◆ links with Further Education establishments, restaurants, industry partners</li> <li>◆ visits to local food outlets or cookery shows and exhibitions</li> <li>◆ individual, paired or group practical activities to practise and demonstrate garnishing and decoration techniques</li> <li>◆ group research tasks and the creation of image board on different types of garnishes and decorations</li> <li>◆ self-evaluation and peer-evaluation activities to help candidates reflect on work and identify areas for improvement</li> </ul>

Course aims	Suggested learning activities
<p>Develop an understanding of the characteristics of ingredients, including allergens and an awareness of their sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ using supermarket leaflets, magazines and online resources to investigate ingredient availability, seasonality and sustainability</li> <li>◆ group presentations focused on local produce</li> <li>◆ food miles challenges</li> <li>◆ group discussions or presentations on a range of ingredients and their characteristics</li> <li>◆ exploring current food waste reduction campaigns</li> <li>◆ research tasks focusing on ingredient availability and sourcing</li> <li>◆ case studies that include costing of ingredients and recipes</li> <li>◆ online research into the functions of ingredients in cookery</li> <li>◆ ‘what am I?’ identification game — identifying ingredients based on their characteristics</li> <li>◆ mood boards or storyboards looking at sustainability, seasonality and food miles</li> <li>◆ mind mapping or brainstorming sessions to explore sustainability in the context of food</li> <li>◆ research tasks or class debates comparing seasonal vs non-seasonal ingredients or local vs imported ingredients</li> <li>◆ class presentations on importance of choosing sustainable ingredients</li> <li>◆ research common allergens</li> <li>◆ preparing food and taking common allergens into account</li> </ul>
<p>Develop an understanding of current dietary advice relating to the use of ingredients</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ presentations on current dietary advice</li> <li>◆ group activities on implementing dietary advice in practical contexts</li> <li>◆ adapt and make recipes to promote healthier choices and reflect on current dietary advice</li> <li>◆ matching exercises linking specific ingredients to current dietary advice</li> <li>◆ create current dietary advice leaflets to use in school or other settings</li> </ul>

Course aims	Suggested learning activities
Plan and produce meals and present them appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ recipe bookmarks or guides on testing food for readiness</li> <li>◆ photographs of finished dishes to support evaluation</li> <li>◆ preparing dishes for a variety of occasions</li> <li>◆ researching suitable recipes for a variety of specific events or themes</li> <li>◆ individual, paired or group activities to plan and carry out preparation of dishes</li> <li>◆ class discussions or quizzes on testing food for readiness</li> <li>◆ using TV cookery programmes, online content, magazines and recipe books for research</li> <li>◆ self-evaluation and peer-evaluation activities to help identify strengths and areas for improvement</li> </ul>
Work safely and hygienically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ create collages, posters or information leaflets linked to safe and hygienic practices</li> <li>◆ visits from environmental health professionals</li> <li>◆ peer support and peer evaluation focusing on safe and hygienic practices</li> <li>◆ practical food activities to allow candidates to demonstrate safe and hygienic practices</li> <li>◆ working in pairs to identify potential safety and hygiene hazards in a food preparation area</li> <li>◆ produce hygiene and safety posters, such as 'Handling eggs and raw meat' or 'Safe storage and cooking of ingredients'</li> <li>◆ case studies such as a 'disaster kitchen' to identify hygiene and safety errors</li> </ul>

## Preparing for course assessment

This course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher or lecturer to enable candidates to prepare for course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the course and at various points throughout the course for consolidation and support. It may also be used towards the end of the course, for further integration, revision and preparation for course assessment.

Course assessment takes the form of a question paper and a practical activity which draw on the skills, knowledge and understanding developed across the course. Teachers and lecturers should ensure they cover the entire content for the course given in the course specification.

Practical skills take a long time to develop, so teachers and lecturers must give candidates numerous opportunities to apply a range of cookery skills and evaluate both the process and the final dishes in order to improve those skills. Teachers and lecturers should continually emphasise the importance of safe and hygienic practices to ensure standards are maintained consistently.

To prepare for the practical activity, candidates could be provided with opportunities to:

- ◆ produce three-course meals in an appropriate time allocation, for example 2 hours 30 minutes

To prepare for the question paper, candidates could be provided with opportunities to:

- ◆ develop 'flash' cards to be used for revision of knowledge
- ◆ develop mnemonics (or similar) to support retention of knowledge
- ◆ requisition equipment needed to prepare specific dishes based on recipe information
- ◆ develop service details for dishes based on recipe information
- ◆ revise the characteristics of ingredients by carrying out 'fill in the blanks' or 'pairing' exercises
- ◆ practice unseen short-answer questions
- ◆ practice unseen timed questions

## Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

You should identify opportunities throughout the course for candidates to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Candidates should be aware of the skills they are developing and teachers and lecturers can provide advice on opportunities to practise and improve them.

Qualifications Scotland does not formally assess skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

There may also be opportunities to develop additional skills depending on approaches being used to deliver the course in each centre. This is for individual teachers and lecturers to manage.

The table below illustrates how these skills can be further developed in the course.

<b>Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work</b>	<b>Learning and teaching opportunities for development</b>
<b>2 Numeracy</b>	<b>2.2 Money, time and measurement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ developing numeracy skills in the measurement of ingredients, using scales measuring spoons and jugs</li> <li>◆ applying numerical skills to calculations involving:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— temperature</li> <li>— cooking times</li> <li>— time management when following a plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship</b>	<b>4.1 Employability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ planning tasks</li> <li>◆ working with others</li> <li>◆ being punctual and managing time</li> <li>◆ showing flexibility, resilience, initiative and responsibility</li> </ul>
<b>5 Thinking skills</b>	<b>5.1 Remembering</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ using food preparation techniques and following cookery processes in different contexts</li> </ul> <b>5.2 Understanding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ correctly using equipment and techniques</li> </ul>

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Learning and teaching opportunities for development
<b>5 Thinking skills</b>	<b>5.3 Applying</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ correctly applying and monitoring cookery processes</li> <li>◆ demonstrating and applying knowledge of safe and hygienic practices</li> <li>◆ checking foods for readiness and taking appropriate action</li> <li>◆ evaluating the prepared dishes</li> </ul>

The development of both cookery-specific and generic skills are central to this course, and teachers and lecturers should make candidates aware of the skills they are developing and of the transferability of the generic skills. It is this transferability that will help candidates with further study and enhance their personal effectiveness and employability.

# Administrative information

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**Published:** June 2026 (version 3.0)

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## History of changes to course specification

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Course support notes added as appendix. Course name and code updated.	July 2019
3.0	<p>We've removed the assignment from the course and we've adjusted the marks for the question paper and practical activity. The question paper is now 35 marks and the practical activity is 65 marks.</p> <p>We've updated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ marks</li><li>◆ course code</li><li>◆ course rationale, purpose and aims</li><li>◆ skills, knowledge and understanding:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>— updated food preparation techniques to include finely chop, finely dice, finely slice</li><li>— updated cookery processes to separate shallow frying from stir frying</li><li>— added cookery processes: simmering, sauté, and sweat</li><li>— added awareness of food allergens to understanding ingredients</li></ul></li><li>◆ course assessment structure (pp 11–13) including guidance on using mobile phones during the practical activity</li><li>◆ appendix: approaches to learning and teaching, learning activities table, and preparing for course assessment</li></ul> <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 added a new 'Learning for Sustainability' section and updated the 'Equality and inclusion' and 'Further information' sections.</p> <p>We've made changes to the format and layout of the document to improve accessibility.</p>	June 2026

Version	Description of change	Date
	<p><b>What you need to do differently</b> There are only two course components now so you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ ensure you use the most up-to-date version of the course specification and are aware of the changes to the question paper and practical activity</li> <li>◆ ensure that the most up-to-date mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding list is being used, in particular revised food preparation techniques, cookery processes and allergens</li> <li>◆ pay particular attention to the updated course assessment structure section (pp 11-13) because updated and clearer guidance has been provided for the practical activity</li> <li>◆ familiarise yourself with the revised specimen coursework assessment task and revised specimen question paper</li> <li>◆ use the latest Understanding Standards materials</li> <li>◆ use the new course code (see title page)</li> </ul>	

Note: please check [Qualifications Scotland's website](#) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.

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