



Outcome of the technical consultation on the proposed modifications to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher course assessments for session 2020–21

Analysis of consultation responses

October 2020
Version 3.0

1 Purpose

This report provides an analysis of responses to the technical consultation on proposed modifications to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher course assessments in session 2020–21. The technical consultation was available on the SQA website and detailed what the proposed modifications were for all National 5 to Advanced Higher National Courses in session 2020-21. The purpose of the technical consultation was to allow practitioners to inform and shape the modifications to National Courses in session 2020–21. While practitioners were the priority group for this technical consultation, in the interests of transparency it was open to the public.

This report provides respondents and other interested parties with the quantitative responses to proposals and a summary of the qualitative responses received, including high level outcomes. Further detail of the modifications at subject level, alongside rationales for the decisions made can be found on the relevant National Course subject pages.

National 5 course assessment 2020–21

Following the announcement by the Deputy First Minister on 7 October 2020, **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 on an alternative certification model for National 5 that is based on teacher and lecturer estimates.

Details of the modifications we had previously intended to make to the National 5 course assessments are included in this report as a point of reference.

We are developing subject specific guidance for National 5 on gathering evidence for the purpose of estimation in session 2020-21. This guidance will include where the National 5 modifications may be used to inform this process.

Centres need to gather evidence of candidate attainment and use this to determine estimated grades and bands. We have published separate guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates and there is also an SQA Academy course available to support you.

Details of the modifications we had previously intended to make to the National 5 course assessments are included in this report as a point of reference.

The National 5 modifications were designed to increase opportunities for learning and teaching. However, they now cannot be implemented as originally intended due to the decision to remove external assessment. Therefore, we are now in the process of developing subject specific guidance on evidence and estimates including where the National 5 modifications may be used to inform the gathering of evidence to produce estimates in session 2020-21.

2 Background

The Scottish Government's '*Coronavirus (COVID-19): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision*'¹ made it clear that a full timetable of SQA exams and coursework was planned at all levels in 2021. However, we recognise the impact that COVID-19 has had, and will continue to have, on learning and teaching and the remaining risk of disruption to the amount of teaching that can be delivered in session 2020–21.

On 14 August 2020 we published a technical consultation outlining the proposed modifications that could be made to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses to support teachers, lecturers and candidates in session 2020–21. The purpose of these proposals was to support greater opportunities for learning and teaching, while maintaining the validity, credibility and standard of these qualifications.

3 Method

The technical consultation outlining the proposed modifications for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher course assessments was published on the SQA website on the 14 August 2020 and remained live until midnight on the 24 August 2020. The technical consultation received a very significant volume of responses, closing with 22,216 responses. Of those 22,216 approximately 5,000 represented a response where no information had been provided and the respondent appears to have proceeded no further than the consultation landing page.

The technical consultation provided a brief background and highlighted that this was primarily for practitioners due to the technical nature of the modifications being proposed, however in the interests of transparency it was open to all to respond.

The initial questions asked respondents to identify themselves (as practitioner, candidate, parent/ carer or other). They were also asked to identify their centre, if appropriate.

The consultation was formed of 275 questions, both quantitative and qualitative in nature, covering National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher subject areas. By selecting subjects at the start of the survey, respondents could answer only questions relevant to them.

We sought feedback on the overarching guiding principles which shaped the proposed modifications, and the modifications at subject and level and additionally. We also invited comment on issues of equality and accessibility. All equality and accessibility questions were analysed separately and are reported on in a broader equality impact assessment, which is available [here](#).

Respondents were invited to review and feedback on each proposal (as applicable to them) by indicating the extent to which they agreed with the proposed modifications. This was done by choosing one of five responses on a standard Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree). Neutral responses were not included as negative or positive, in the quantitative analysis. There was also opportunity to make qualitative comments about each proposal.

¹ Scottish Government (2020) Coronavirus (COVID-19): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision [online]. Available from: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/excellent-equity-during-covid-19-pandemic-strategic-framework-reopening-schools-early-learning-childcare-provision-scotland/pages/6/> [accessed 30 June 2020]

Qualitative responses were analysed at subject level and in order to identify themes, all responses were coded.

We have presented the quantitative data from each Likert scale in tables and bar charts which show the proportion of responses. We have analysed the qualitative responses received at a subject level and have identified the key themes that emerged from the responses. In the following analysis we have included some verbatim quotes, to illustrate the main themes identified. We have edited some for brevity and to preserve anonymity but have been careful not to change their meaning.

4 Consultation analysis

4.1 Introduction

The consultation closed at midnight on 24 August 2020, by which time a total of 22,216 respondents had accessed the survey. Almost 17,000 respondents completed the consultation and provided a range of quantitative and qualitative responses which have informed and shaped the modifications being taken forward.

To allow us to report broadly on the reach and representation of responses, respondents were asked to select an appropriate description of themselves and their centre: approximately 60% of responses came from practitioners; 22% from candidates and 16% from parents. The remainder of the responses came from 'Other' stakeholders, which included stakeholder representative organisations.

The following table is a summary by types of respondent who completed the consultation.

Respondent description	Response percentage	Number of responses
Candidate	21.74%	3,631
Parent/ Carer	16.03%	2,677
Practitioner	60.20%	10,053
Other (please specify)	2.02%	338
Breakdown of 'Other' respondents:		
Respondent description	Number of responses	
Multiple (an individual who identified several descriptions, eg practitioner and parent)	34	
Relative of candidate	14	
Senior centre staff (eg head teacher, depute head, principal teacher)	24	
SQA co-ordinators	10	
Stakeholder representative organisations / group responses	32	
Teacher	104	
Lecturer	11	
Student	31	
SQA appointee	7	
Other	71	
Total		16,699

As illustrated in the bar chart below, most respondents indicated that their centre was best described as a Local authority secondary school, with 89% of responses coming from these centres. Where respondents selected either 'Not applicable' or 'Other' the majority of these individuals indicated that they were neither a candidate nor practitioner and therefore did not associate themselves with a centre.

In the remainder of these cases, the responses represent an instance where a centre has been identified by name, is representative of a university hub response, or is provided by a subject organisation. All responses from representative bodies have been replied to individually and their concerns have been addressed, where possible, in the final proposed modifications.

2. Which of the following best describes your centre?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Local authority secondary school		89.01%	14,864
2	Independent school		7.04%	1,176
3	Special school		0.21%	35
4	Independent - state school		1.03%	172
5	College		1.47%	246
6	Not applicable		0.81%	135
7	Other (please specify):		0.43%	71
			answered	16,699

4.2 Guiding Principles

SQA has a duty to ensure that the standard of its qualifications is credible and that they provide nationally and internationally recognised standards of attainment. This means that all assessment methods must meet SQA's Code of Practice and Governing Principles and be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.

In developing our proposals, we have drawn on the feedback we have gathered from engagement with Scottish Government's COVID-19 Education Recovery Group, SQA qualifications managers, principal assessors and their senior subject teams, subject implementation managers and, in some cases, existing National Qualifications Support Teams (NQSTs). NQSTs include expert practitioners, representatives from professional bodies, universities and/or colleges.

The purpose of this engagement was to explore alternative approaches to the assessment of National Courses in session 2020–21 with a view to finding an approach that might mitigate some of the current challenges faced by the teaching community in Scottish schools, while maintaining the validity, reliability and practicability of the qualifications. SQA has agreed high level principles to support modifications to National 5 to Advanced Higher course assessments, where practicable, that will aim to support:

- ◆ the delivery and assessment of subjects that are constrained by current social distancing measures. For example, in practical and performance-based components.

- ◆ increased learning and teaching opportunities, where possible.
- ◆ a more flexible approach to the assessment of learners, while retaining the validity of the qualifications.

The consultation provided respondents with the opportunity to respond to our guiding principles through a five-point Likert scale. Overarchingly, respondents agreed that the guiding principles outlined in the consultation were appropriate, as a set of principles.

Analysis of the responses has found that across all respondents there was broad support for these guiding principles, as shown below.

3. To what extent do you agree that it is appropriate that modifications to course assessment be considered in line with the following guiding principles?						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Response Total
The delivery and assessment of subjects that are constrained by current social distancing measures. For example, in practical and performance-based components.	65.6% (10,733)	23.3% (3,817)	6.6% (1,076)	2.2% (353)	2.4% (392)	16,371
Increased learning and teaching opportunities, where possible.	56.8% (9,266)	28.7% (4,674)	9.8% (1,605)	2.5% (402)	2.2% (361)	16,308
A more flexible approach to assessment for learners, whilst retaining the validity of the qualifications.	67.1% (10,967)	23.3% (3,805)	5.1% (841)	2.3% (374)	2.2% (361)	16,348
					answered	16,439

Although, there was no opportunity to provide qualitative feedback to this question a number of professional representative bodies provided us with feedback through alternative routes. These responses indicated concern at the lack of coherence around the modifications at subject level indicating that a lack of consistency might make learning inequitable across the senior phase and how these changes might be future proofed.

All responses from representative bodies have been replied to individually and their concerns have been addressed, where possible, in the final proposed modifications.

4.2.1 The delivery and assessment of subjects constrained by current social distancing measures

At this time, and due to the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, the extent to which social distancing will continue, be re-introduced or increased is not known. Therefore, it was necessary to consider the implications of social distancing measures and, where appropriate, Education Scotland subject specific guidance on the delivery and assessment of National Qualifications.

Qualifications teams identified where current assessment requirements in their subjects may prove to be challenging should social distancing be required. Working closely with National Qualification Subject Teams (NQSTs) and Qualification Subject Teams (QSTs) modifications were proposed in a number of subject areas to suggest how to mitigate this.

Consultation responses indicated that the proposed modifications were not significant enough to support teachers and learners during these unprecedented times. In response to this feedback, we have introduced larger scale change at subject level to provide greater support.

4.2.2 Increased learning and teaching opportunities, where possible

For some National Courses, it is proposed that making modifications to the course assessment requirements will release learning and teaching time, reducing the pressure on teachers, lecturers and candidates. It is hoped that this time could be used to support teachers, lecturers and candidates in adjusting to returning to centres, and provide time to review and revisit content delivered during or before the lockdown period.

This included in some subjects:

- ◆ changes to optionality in question papers
- ◆ the removal of course components
- ◆ advanced notification of topics to be assessed
- ◆ removal of particular topics in the question paper
- ◆ alternative approaches to sampling

Where these measures were proposed, they received strong support. However, it was clear from responses that, in some subjects, more significant modifications were required to ensure coherence. Where appropriate, respondents' views have been incorporated into the final proposed modifications.

4.2.3 More flexible approach to assessment for candidates, while retaining the validity of the qualifications

Where appropriate, proposals include modifications to the conditions of assessment in some areas of the coursework assessment and include proposals that are designed to have a positive psychological effect on candidates undertaking the assessments. These modifications may make the course assessment more manageable for centres and candidates; however, there may be implications for the quality assurance processes for these components in some cases.

Responses indicated that changes to coursework, in some subjects, should be more significant than proposed. These responses have been taken into consideration in the final proposed modifications.

5 Subject specific analysis

Following the announcement by the Deputy First Minister on 7 October 2020, **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 on an alternative certification model for National 5 that is based on teacher and lecturer estimates. We are developing subject specific guidance for National 5 on gathering evidence for the purpose of estimation in session 2020-21. This guidance will include where the National 5 modifications may be used to inform this process.

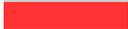
Details of the modifications we had previously intended to make to the National 5 course assessments are included in this report as a point of reference.

Additionally, there was originally a working assumption of minimal modification to Advanced Higher, as there is more self-directed learning at that level. However, general feedback to this technical consultation asked for changes to Advanced Higher to be further considered across all courses, to take account of the challenging circumstances of this year. As a result, we have made modifications to all Advanced Higher courses on the grounds of equity.

5.1 Accounting

A total of 244 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Accounting, contributing 1.60% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposals were to make modifications to the question paper at National 5 and Higher. No modifications were proposed at Advanced Higher.

There was broad support for the modifications proposed for Accounting, as illustrated in the bar charts below.

5. National 5 Accounting				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Accounting in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		30.47%	39
2	Agree		44.53%	57
3	Neutral		12.50%	16
4	Disagree		6.25%	8
5	Strongly Disagree		6.25%	8
			answered	128

7. Higher Accounting				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Accounting in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		29.63%	40
2	Agree		44.44%	60
3	Neutral		11.11%	15
4	Disagree		8.89%	12
5	Strongly Disagree		5.93%	8
			answered	135

9. Advanced Higher Accounting

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Accounting in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		25.29%	22
2	Agree		32.18%	28
3	Neutral		36.78%	32
4	Disagree		0.00%	0
5	Strongly Disagree		5.75%	5
			answered	87

YOU SAID...

The feedback indicated a high percentage of support for the removal of the assignment in Accounting, intended to free up learning and teaching time. Respondents were positive about the proposal and were encouraged that practitioners would be advised of the topics that would have been covered in the assignment.

'The removal of the assignment, and informing of assignment topics, helps to ensure that candidates will face a comparable question paper to those in previous years. Under the current circumstances, this proposal is the best option available.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Many respondents agreed that the removal of the assignment would help to offset the reduction in teaching time available to them. Several respondents raised concerns about the amount of teaching time that has been lost and supported the proposal that there will be no direct sampling of associated content in the question paper. They also supported that teachers and lecturers be made aware of the topics that would have been in the assignment and be free to decide the timing and depth of delivery of these topics.

'No teaching of the assignment topics should be required. We have lost more than 15% of teaching time.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I agree that more teaching time will be beneficial when delivering the National 5 Accounting course with the removal of the Assignments topics. It would require early notification of what the topics were and confirmation that these topics will definitely not make an appearance in the question paper.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Removal of the assignment will give more time for teaching learning.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment), and no direct sampling of associated content in the question paper. The associated content is:

- ◆ Preparing ledger accounts
- ◆ Break even
- ◆ Job costing
- ◆ Spreadsheets

The above content will not be assessed as either computational or theory questions in 2021.

Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. As always, teachers and lecturers will be made aware of the topics that would have been in the assignment. They will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery, and any internal assessment of these topics.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment), and no direct sampling of associated content in the question paper.

Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. As always, teachers and lecturers will be made aware of the topics that would have been in the assignment. They will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery, and any internal assessment of these topics.

At Advanced Higher:

Across subjects, the qualitative feedback to the national consultation highlighted concerns at Advanced Higher level. Therefore, for reasons of equity across SQA national courses and in order to increase opportunities for learning and teaching, we will inform centres of topic areas that will not be directly assessed in 2021.

5.2 Administration and IT

A total of 717 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Administration and IT, contributing 4.71% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to remove the database question and adjust the time of the examination accordingly at National 5, and to remove practical database tasks from the assignment at Higher.

There was broad support for these proposals as illustrated by the bar charts below.

12. National 5 Administration and IT

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Administration and IT in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		28.71%	122
2	Agree		37.41%	159
3	Neutral		12.71%	54
4	Disagree		11.76%	50
5	Strongly Disagree		9.41%	40
			answered	425

14. Higher Administration and IT

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Administration and IT in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		30.47%	124
2	Agree		36.86%	150
3	Neutral		13.02%	53
4	Disagree		10.57%	43
5	Strongly Disagree		9.09%	37
			answered	407

YOU SAID...

There was broad agreement with the proposals for modifications of Administration and IT, with respondents supportive of both the modification and the rationale for change. Practitioners noted that the database component would be the most complex to deliver remotely should blended learning be required at any point.

'Agree fully with the rationale of removing the practical database task from both the N5 and Higher exams. Candidates do not have this software package at home and therefore any practical skill development in this area using blended learning would be difficult.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I think the reasoning is completely understandable.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

In addition to supporting the rationale, respondents felt the approach removing this component would make assessment more equitable for candidates, for example, for those who may have struggled to access appropriate ICT.

'Think it is correct to remove database - more equitable for students.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I feel that removing the database element of the course will have a positive impact as most learners find this area difficult and may to have the ability to cope with this area through home/blended learning. I also feel that most students do not have the appropriate ICT equipment or software at home to be able to carry out this unit effectively.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper to:

- ◆ remove the practical database question. Question paper reduces by 10 marks to 40 marks, comprising 23 marks for the spreadsheet question and 17 marks for the theory question. Note: the number of theory marks in the question paper will increase. However, the total number of theory marks across both components will not exceed the maximum across the course assessment as outlined in the course specification.
- ◆ reduce the exam duration to acknowledge removal of the practical database question. Change from 2 hours to 1 hour and 30 mins
- ◆ delay in the coursework assessment period.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the assignment to:

- ◆ remove the practical database tasks. Assignment reduces by 10 marks to 60 marks, comprising 24 marks for the spreadsheet tasks, 24 marks for the word-processing/ DTP tasks and 12 marks for the communications tasks
- ◆ reduce the assignment duration to acknowledge removal of the practical database tasks. Change from 2 hours to 1 hour and 45 minutes
- ◆ delay to the coursework assessment period

5.3 Applications of Mathematics

A total of 492 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Applications of Mathematics, contributing 3.23% of the total responses to the consultation. The proposal was to return to the pre-2018 exam length in this subject.

Quantitative feedback from the consultation made it clear that there was no consensus on the proposal.

17. National 5 Applications of Mathematics				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Applications of Mathematics in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		10.78%	33
2	Agree		25.49%	78
3	Neutral		13.40%	41
4	Disagree		23.86%	73
5	Strongly Disagree		26.47%	81
			answered	306

YOU SAID...

Qualitative responses indicated that the majority of respondents felt that the proposed modification would not be sufficient to increase learning and teaching time. This was often the view, whether or not the respondent supported the modification itself.

'It has to be taken into account the amount of time the S4 students have not been taught, and are still disrupted'

(Parent/carer, Local authority secondary school)

'This will not help. Delay when we do exam since we lost a good amount of work.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school)

'Seems pointless to have a shorter exam if we still have to learn exactly the same amount - may as well show what we know. Course will be more weighted to what actually comes up in exam rather than what's been studied'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school)

A number of respondents provided alternative approaches to modifying course assessment in a way that would provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'The current pandemic means that it will be difficult to teach all the content required. Would must prefer some limit to the content and optional sections in the paper.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school)

'Shortening the exam without removing content will not help. The entire course still has to be covered in a shortened time scale. Pupils will have to study the entire course and have fewer opportunities to gain marks. A short exam is pointless without the reintroduction of unit tests.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school)

'Slightly shortening the course assessments goes nowhere near far enough in addressing the impact of Covid for learners. We should be looking at including alternative models of assessment such as: ongoing teacher appraisal as students overtake key skills; building in teacher estimates as a way of mitigating poor performance in a final exam; lowering grade boundaries. We should also be looking at reducing content. It's simply unrealistic to expect this year's cohort to reach the same standards as in previous years.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

Modification of question paper 2:

Given the duration and mark allocation in the first component, there is no optionality in paper 1. Optionality has been introduced in paper 2. Candidates will sit a number of mandatory questions and then have a choice of questions in one of two options. Each option represents a similar amount of learning and teaching time and will be of similar difficulty in the assessment. 16% of the total marks will be allocated to each optional section.

A minor adjustment to the length of the question papers has been introduced to accommodate this optionality.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

5.4 Art and Design

A total of 1171 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Art and Design, contributing 7.70% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to provide additional guidance on producing a portfolio at National 5 and Higher. No modification was proposed at Advanced Higher (Design or Expressive).

There was broad agreement with these proposals as illustrated by the bar chart below.

20. National 5 Art and Design

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Art and Design in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		23.28%	156
2	Agree		32.24%	216
3	Neutral		15.37%	103
4	Disagree		13.88%	93
5	Strongly Disagree		15.22%	102
			answered	670

22. Higher Art and Design

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Art and Design in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		22.33%	134
2	Agree		29.83%	179
3	Neutral		15.67%	94
4	Disagree		16.33%	98
5	Strongly Disagree		15.83%	95
			answered	600

24. Advanced Higher Art and Design (Design and Expressive)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Art and Design (Design and Expressive) in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		18.37%	97
2	Agree		26.52%	140
3	Neutral		31.06%	164
4	Strongly Disagree		12.31%	65

24. Advanced Higher Art and Design (Design and Expressive)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Art and Design (Design and Expressive) in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
5	Disagree		11.74%	62
			answered	528

YOU SAID...

Respondents highlighted that for Art and Design, COVID-19 restrictions mean materials cannot be shared and this puts candidates at a disadvantage as they have less equitable access to resources.

'For National 5 Art and Design, we need a wide variety of medias to successfully complete our qualification, such as pastels, glue guns, and the like. These were intended to be shared with a range of pupils, available as and when they needed them. However, currently with the new guidelines, this is no longer possible. Currently, we need to find out some way to be supplied with those medias which are essential to completing our qualification, or we need to do some critical rethinking into how our assessments take place this year.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'There is already an uneven playing field across Scotland with some schools having completed course work in lockdown, others like ours are just starting courses. The written exam needs to be looked at as well as the practical, changing the amount of artists/designers to be studied. Our pupils did not have access to art materials at home and ate therefore just starting on folios where others are well under way. Our pupils/school do not have the luxury of technology therefore briefs such as surface pattern are completely hand drawn rather than computer generated taking more time.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Some respondents indicated that the proposal does not provide enough detail about the modification and called for more clarity on how to reduce the quantity of candidate work without impacting on marks candidates are awarded.

'However we would need a very direct guidance as to what will be seen as too much to too little. I feel that it is easy to say submit less work but how do we know if it is enough? How do we show development with a smaller amount of submissions when they need to explore a theme for both expressive and design. It is easy to say to choose an easier theme but the development of that will still take the same work and need to be done to the same standard. There needs to be a change to the assessment.'

(Practitioner, Independent State school, National 5 and Higher)

Many respondents did not feel that the modification would reduce the workload for candidates or practitioners and some suggested that consideration should also be given to modifications to the exam.

'I agree with the suggested approach and guidance is very much appreciated especially with regards to minimum size and quantity in order to get full marks; I feel more should be considered too. Some centres/pupils only submit the minimum requirements as is and for some pupils this is all the work they have so they are essentially being asked to do the exact same as previous years.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5 and Higher)

'We are going to have to limit what is being taught because we cannot cover everything.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher)

Broadly, feedback from the consultation indicated that allowing candidates to choose to respond to either the Expressive Art Studies or Design Studies section of the question paper would free up learning and teaching time as this will allow centres to take a more focused approach to exam preparation.

'The critical paper which is worth less marks takes up a lot of learning & teaching, marking & revising time and I would consider reducing the amount of artists/designers to study for this exam (other subjects have had questions or content removed or reduced from their exam papers).'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher)

'If we are going ahead with exam perhaps reduce the optional analysis questions to One for expressive Studies and one for design Studies.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5, Higher)

'Teaching time may be reduced - they have already missed the start of the course in June, so could the N5 exam be simpler? Could students learn about only one artist and artwork and one designer and design (as they do in Higher), or could the part b) be removed?'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper to:

Introduce further optionality into the question paper. Candidates will choose to respond to either the Expressive Art Studies or Design Studies section. This will reduce the marks

available for the question paper from 50 to 25, and the time allocation to one hour (includes reading time as at present).

This mark will be scaled in order that the question paper remains at 20% of the course.

Guidance for the portfolio:

Guidance on the amount of work that candidates can submit for each stage of the portfolios will be provided. For example, guidance on choosing a less complex theme/design brief.

The guidance will be provided in a separate document. There will also be an audio-visual presentation providing exemplification of expressive and design portfolios to illustrate how the guidance can be applied in practice.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

Further optionality will be introduced into the question paper. Candidates will choose to respond to either the Expressive Art Studies or Design Studies section. This will reduce the marks available for the question paper from 60 to 30, and the time allocation to one hour and fifteen minutes (includes reading time as at present).

This mark will be scaled so that the question paper remains as 23% of the course.

Guidance for the portfolios:

Guidance on the amount of work that candidates can submit for each stage of the portfolios will be provided. For example, guidance on choosing a less complex theme/design brief. The guidance will be provided in a separate document. There will also be an audio-visual presentation providing exemplification of expressive and design portfolios to illustrate how the guidance can be applied in practice.

At Advanced Higher (both Design and Expressive):

Modification of the portfolios:

The volume of practical work for both the expressive and design portfolio will be reduced from 8–16 A1 sheets (or equivalent) to 6–12 A1 sheets (or equivalent). Sketchbooks and formats smaller than A1 sheets are acceptable for this work.

5.5 Biology

A total of 2,887 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Biology, contributing 18.97% of the total responses to the consultation. The original modification was to return the Biology question paper duration and structure to pre-2018 format for both National 5 and Higher. There was no modification proposed at Advanced Higher.

There was a strong level of disagreement on this approach as illustrated in the bar charts below.

27. National 5 Biology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Biology in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		10.51%	168
2	Agree		18.84%	301
3	Neutral		15.52%	248
4	Disagree		19.46%	311
5	Strongly Disagree		35.67%	570
			answered	1,598

29. Higher Biology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Biology in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.21%	116
2	Agree		16.42%	232
3	Neutral		16.99%	240
4	Disagree		20.74%	293
5	Strongly Disagree		37.65%	532
			answered	1,413

31. Advanced Higher Biology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Biology in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.45%	100
2	Agree		14.29%	169
3	Neutral		30.77%	364
4	Disagree		16.15%	191

31. Advanced Higher Biology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Biology in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
5	Strongly Disagree		30.35%	359
			answered	1,183

YOU SAID...

Respondents indicated strongly that the proposed modification was not significant enough to increase learning and teaching time.

'Shortening the exam does not make a difference if you are still having to learn all the coursework. Instead coursework should be modified as students will have less time to study, revise and be taught the work that you want us all to complete. This will give a disadvantage as students will be having to work harder to get the same results as previous years which can affect their future while still having to work around this global situation.'

(Candidate, Locally Authority secondary school, Higher)

'It would hugely benefit practitioners and candidates if the mandatory practical element of the Higher biology coursework assessment was removed. If the coursework structure and assessment was reverted back to pre-2018 specifications then it would have a hugely positive impact on our learning and teaching.'

(Practitioners, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

The great majority of respondents indicated that their preferred modification would be the removal of the coursework instead citing how challenging delivery and assessment of this component would be, due to social distancing requirements and Local Authority Health and Safety protocols, and compliance with the guidelines issued by the Scottish Schools Education Research Centre (SSERC).

'Shortening the duration of the exam does nothing to free up time for teaching and learning. Constraints on practical activities in Science make the assignment very tricky...was any consideration given to removing this element - this would create more teaching time!'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'You should remove assignment to increase learning time for things we missed during lockdown'

(Candidate, Locally Authority secondary school, National 5)

'The Royal Society of Biology feel's SQA's proposals for Biology, and indeed across the sciences, do not go far enough in addressing the huge change in students' experience and possible time remaining for high quality teaching and learning in 2020-21 qualifications...

We stand by the importance of practical skills and techniques, and the opportunity for students to experience phenomena through observation and manipulation. Engagement with practical activities improves knowledge and understanding in our subject, and while every component of a National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher is important, we do recognise that some flexibility in the system could be useful in these circumstance and allow knowledge, understanding and skills to be picked up and developed from a different starting point at the next phase of education, if teachers and centres are given enough guidance and time to do so.

However, in these exceptional circumstances, the Society would support removal of the National 5 Biology assignment and associated investigation in response to ongoing disruptions due to COVID-19. As we expect students to complete other non-assessed practical work during their qualification, we feel that for this cohort only, removing the assignment requirements would meaningfully reduce the burden of teaching and learning and free up time otherwise used to conduct the investigation and sit the assessment under exam conditions, while still ensuring students have opportunities to complete non-assessed practical activities.'

(The Royal Society of Biology – extract)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Modification of the question paper:

There will be no change to the question paper component.

The format and the length of the question papers will **not** be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions, will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

There will be no change to the question paper component.

The format and the length of the question papers will **not** be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions, will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

At Advanced Higher:

It is acknowledged that the development of practical skills in biology is essential, and that candidates should undertake and experience practical work in science courses at all levels. However, in these unique circumstances, it is proposed that the coursework (project) component is removed from the course for one year only, as there was overwhelmingly strong support for this modification.

Modification of the project:

Removal of the coursework component (project) for session 2020–21 only.

5.6 Business Management

A total of 1,054 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Business Management, contributing 6.93% of the total responses to the consultation. The original modification was for certain sub-topic areas of content not to be directly assessed in 2021. There was no modification proposed at Advanced Higher.

There was broad agreement on this approach as illustrated in the bar charts below.

34. National 5 Business Management				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Business Management in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		25.86%	136
2	Agree		35.17%	185
3	Neutral		19.39%	102
4	Disagree		10.08%	53
5	Strongly Disagree		9.51%	50
			answered	526

36. Higher Business Management

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Business Management in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		25.35%	127
2	Agree		35.73%	179
3	Neutral		17.56%	88
4	Disagree		10.78%	54
5	Strongly Disagree		10.58%	53
			answered	501

38. Advanced Higher Business Management

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Business Management in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		19.15%	63
2	Agree		26.14%	86
3	Neutral		46.81%	154
4	Disagree		3.95%	13
5	Strongly Disagree		3.95%	13
			answered	329

YOU SAID...

Feedback from the consultation indicated that a minor narrowing of assessable content will assist teachers in freeing up learning and teaching time while still ensuring the standard of the qualification can be maintained. However, even where there was agreement some respondents felt that additional modifications should be considered.

'I agree that some subtopics must be removed from the exam as we are already a month behind learning and we could be further behind if we go back into lockdown.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I agree with the subtopic areas not being examined, being disclosed to teachers but I feel the Assignment is very time consuming and requires teacher guidance at the start. Once again, the time lost so far is going to adversely affect pupils in the end.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Removal of subtopics will be complex to implement and will impact on workload in order to adapt class materials for one year. National 5 business report assignment offers little benefit to pupils and would not affect validity of assessment in the overall course award. If assignment is completed in a distance learning environment it is going to offer very little reliability as an original piece of work due to opportunity of plagiarism and external support from parents/siblings/friends etc.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Modifications across the course assessment:

Centres will be informed of sub-topic areas of content that will not be directly assessed in 2021.

Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. Teachers and lecturers will be aware of the sub-topic areas/ themes that will not feature in the question paper for 2021 and will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery and any internal assessment of these sub-topics and themes.

Modifications to the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21.

Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modifications across the course assessment:

Centres will be informed of sub-topic areas of content that will not be directly assessed in 2021.

Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. Teachers and lecturers will be aware of the sub-topic areas/ themes that will not feature in the question paper for 2021 and will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery and any internal assessment of these sub-topics and themes.

Modifications to the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21.

At Advanced Higher:

Feedback from the consultation highlighted a need to make some adjustment to the volume of content to be covered in Advanced Higher.

Modification across the course assessment:

Centres will be informed of topic areas of content that will not be directly assessed in 2021.

5.7 Care

A total of 47 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Care, contributing 0.31% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposed modification was to specify one brief that all candidates must use rather than have the usual optionality.

The response rate to this subject was very low, but responses to this proposal were broadly positive as the bar charts below indicate.

41. National 5 Care			Response Percent	Response Total
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Care in 2021?				
1	Strongly Agree		31.58%	6
2	Agree		31.58%	6
3	Neutral		36.84%	7
4	Disagree		0.00%	0
5	Strongly Disagree		0.00%	0
			answered	19

43. Higher Care			Response Percent	Response Total
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Care in 2021?				
1	Strongly Agree		30.00%	6
2	Agree		35.00%	7
3	Neutral		25.00%	5
4	Disagree		5.00%	1
5	Strongly Disagree		5.00%	1

43. Higher Care

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Care in 2021?

	Response Percent	Response Total
	answered	20

YOU SAID...

There was also a low volume of qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject. However, qualitative feedback broadly indicated a good level of support for the proposal. Feedback from the consultation indicated that specifying one brief for the project will free up learning and teaching time.

'A valid and reliable approach to the project by focusing on one brief will enable a more holistic approach to teaching and learning.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I think switching to one brief is a positive approach to the 2021 examinations. This would allow teachers to streamline their approach so that the teaching and learning was applicable to all pupils and would give pupils more confidence in their project work. I see no reason to change the exam format as this allows pupils to display their course content knowledge if project writing is not their strong point.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Modification to the project:

Currently candidates have a choice of three briefs on which to base their project. We are proposing to specify one brief that all candidates must use. Centres will be informed of the one brief that all candidates must use for their projects in 2021.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification to the project:

Currently candidates have a choice of three briefs on which to base their project. We are proposing to specify one brief that all candidates must use. Centres will be informed of the one brief that all candidates must use for their projects in 2021.

5.8 Chemistry

A total of 2,834 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Chemistry, contributing 18.63% of the total responses to the consultation. The original modification was to return the Chemistry question paper duration and structure to pre-2018 format for both National 5 and Higher. There was no modification proposed at Advanced Higher.

There was a strong level of disagreement on this approach as illustrated in the bar charts below.

46. National 5 Chemistry				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Chemistry in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		9.47%	137
2	Agree		18.33%	265
3	Neutral		16.80%	243
4	Disagree		18.12%	262
5	Strongly Disagree		37.28%	539
			answered	1,446

48. Higher Chemistry				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Chemistry in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		9.54%	133
2	Agree		16.71%	233
3	Neutral		14.49%	202
4	Disagree		20.16%	281
5	Strongly Disagree		39.10%	545
			answered	1,394

50. Advanced Higher Chemistry

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Chemistry in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.11%	89
2	Agree		14.77%	162
3	Neutral		29.26%	321
4	Disagree		15.04%	165
5	Strongly Disagree		32.82%	360
			answered	1,097

YOU SAID...

There was a strong level of disagreement on this approach and respondents felt that the proposed modifications were not significant enough to provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'Strongly disagree, we should not do the assignment and instead do a normal length exam paper.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Disagree that pupils exam duration should be reduced, as none of the context will be taken out of the course for the shortening of time, this doesn't lessen the exam burden on pupils.'

(Parent / carer, Higher)

A large proportion of respondents have proposed that the assignment should be removed, noting that it would be difficult to deliver such assessment in the current circumstances, due to social distancing requirements and Local Authority Health and Safety protocols.

'Learning and teaching time has been shortened so that we will have to teach the full course contents in a shorter period of time in order for pupils to be able to sit the exam even if the exam is shorter. Removal of the assignment would be more beneficial for the pupils as it would allow more time to teach the course and then the exam could be more extensive. The assignment would also be affected as the pupils are not getting the chance to build their practical skills due to the current situation.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Cannot understand how reducing the length of the assessment will reduce the burden as the same topics will need to be covered. Could the assignment element be removed instead or a choice element in the questions or topic areas to be assessed in the exam?'

(Parent / carer, National 5)

'The assignment should be postponed for this year. With social distancing guidelines and requirements for sterilising equipment between uses, practical work has been suspended. This will allow the schools the time to teach the full course. This will also help schools follow SSERC guidelines re, practical work.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper:

There are no changes proposed to the question paper component. The question paper will not be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions, will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

There will be no change to the question paper component. The format and the length of the question will **not** be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions, will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

Guidance and support for teachers/ lecturers in gathering robust evidence to ensure accurate estimates in the event of a cancellation of the exam diet.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

There will be no change to the question paper component. The format and the length of the question will **not** be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions, will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

Guidance and support for teachers/ lecturers in gathering robust evidence to ensure accurate estimates in the event of a cancellation of the exam diet.

Modification of the project:

Removal of the coursework component (project) for session 2020–21 only.

5.9 Childcare and Development

A total of 105 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Childcare and Development, contributing 0.69% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposed modification was to specify one brief that all candidates must use rather than have the usual optionality.

The response rate to this subject was low, but quantitative responses to this proposal were broadly positive as the bar chart below indicates.

53. Higher Childcare and Development				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Childcare and Development in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.56%	7
2	Agree		35.56%	16
3	Neutral		35.56%	16
4	Disagree		8.89%	4
5	Strongly Disagree		4.44%	2
			answered	45

YOU SAID...

There was also a low volume of qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject. However, qualitative feedback broadly indicated a good level of support for the proposal. Feedback from the consultation indicated that specifying one brief for the project will allow focused learning and teaching and potentially free up learning and teaching time.

‘One generic brief should benefit the assessment process.’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

‘Staff would require the project brief as soon as possible so that teaching meets student / assessment requirements.’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

Modification to project:

Currently candidates have a choice of three briefs on which to base their project. We are proposing to specify one brief that all candidates must use. Centres will be informed of the one brief that candidates must use for their projects in 2021.

5.10 Classical Studies

A total of 91 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Classical Studies, contributing 0.60% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to inform centres of a reduction in the number of universal ideas, themes or values that would be directly assessed in the National 5 and Higher Classical Literature question papers. There was no proposed modification to Advanced Higher.

The response rate to this subject was low, but quantitative responses to this proposal were broadly positive as the bar charts below indicate.

56. National 5 Classical Studies				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Classical Studies in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		26.47%	9
2	Agree		29.41%	10
3	Neutral		11.76%	4
4	Disagree		17.65%	6
5	Strongly Disagree		14.71%	5
			answered	34

58. Higher Classical Studies				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Classical Studies in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		31.58%	12

58. Higher Classical Studies

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Classical Studies in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
2	Agree		28.95%	11
3	Neutral		5.26%	2
4	Disagree		26.32%	10
5	Strongly Disagree		7.89%	3
			answered	38

60. Advanced Higher Classical Studies

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Classical Studies in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		11.54%	3
2	Agree		23.08%	6
3	Neutral		42.31%	11
4	Disagree		19.23%	5
5	Strongly Disagree		3.85%	1
			answered	26

YOU SAID...

There was also a low volume of qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject. Qualitative feedback indicated a good level of support for the proposal. However, a number of respondents suggested removing the assignment as a means of significantly increasing learning and teaching opportunities.

'Retaining coursework is a mistake. Candidates require teaching in order to know how to complete this type of task and I disagree that it lends itself well to blended learning. Candidates will also struggle to find resources to complete coursework if they are not in school. And even if they are, the exchange of books for students to do personal research is a potential infection risk.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Removing a theme or topic from each of the sections in the course content should significantly increase the teaching and learning opportunities. However, there is a lot of

time spent on the Assignment Project which does not bring any added value to the course - all the skills assessed in the Assignment are assessed in the question paper through sampling.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'The assignment takes up a large amount of classroom time and because of the limited access to resources for pupils due to Covid restrictions (in that they are not allowed to use library books) becomes extremely difficult for pupils to research. It is not acceptable for pupils to do their research only on the internet. It would be far better to remove this component so that we can concentrate on teaching.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper:

We propose to inform centres of the two universal ideas, themes or values that will not be directly assessed in Section 2 Classical Literature.

Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. Teachers and lecturers will be aware of the universal ideas, themes or values that will not feature in Section 2 Classical Literature for 2021 and will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery and any internal assessment of these universal ideas, themes or values.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

Centres will be informed of one universal idea, theme or value that will not be directly assessed in the Classical Literature question paper. We will also inform centres of one theme not sampled in each of the four parts of the Classical society question paper:

- ◆ Section 1 Life in classical Greece: Part A — Power and freedom, and Part B — Religion and belief
- ◆ Section 2 Life in the Roman world: Part A — Power and freedom, and Part B — Religion and belief.

Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. Teachers and lecturers will be aware of the themes and knowledge areas that will not feature in the question paper for 2021 and will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery, and any internal assessment of these themes and areas.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21.

At Advanced Higher:**Modification of the question paper:**

For Part A Classical literature, centres will be informed of the books of classical texts. For example, Plato, Republic, Books 1 and 2 (prescribed text in Course Specification — Plato, Republic Books 1–5).

5.11 Computing Science

A total of 947 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Computing Science, contributing 6.22% of the total responses to the consultation. There were originally no modifications proposed for National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher Computing Science.

There was a strong level of disagreement on this approach as illustrated in the bar charts below.

63. National 5 Computing Science				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Computing Science in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		9.28%	48
2	Agree		14.70%	76
3	Neutral		14.31%	74
4	Disagree		15.86%	82
5	Strongly Disagree		45.84%	237
			answered	517

65. Higher Computing Science				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Computing Science in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.51%	40
2	Agree		13.19%	62
3	Neutral		15.11%	71
4	Disagree		15.32%	72

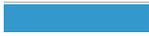
65. Higher Computing Science

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Computing Science in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
5	Strongly Disagree		47.87%	225
			answered	470

67. Advanced Higher Computing Science

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Computing Science in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.02%	32
2	Agree		12.03%	48
3	Neutral		37.09%	148
4	Disagree		8.52%	34
5	Strongly Disagree		34.34%	137
			answered	399

YOU SAID...

There was broadly disagreement with the proposal. Respondents did not believe they could deliver all of the content in this course, as it currently exists, in the time they have available. Respondents have proposed modifications to course assessment.

'Computing Science already has a lot of content and a time consuming practical assignment. By not changing the amount of content that will be assessed compared to other subjects we risk that computing science is perceived as a more difficult subject than others. This could easily affect the uptake of the subject and the overall grade a candidate receives.'

'It would be better to lower the number of marks/time in the paper and/or only to cover SDD and either WDD or DDD not both in the practical assignment therefore freeing up some time which may be lost to the ongoing pandemic.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Consideration should be made to reduce course content and removal of practical tasks in the Assignment. The Question Paper could be reduced from 110 marks to 90 marks change from 2 hr 30 mins to 2 hours.'

Another consideration would be an Optional unit where young people are given the choice in the Assignment to complete the Database or Web Development task; this could be reflected in the Question Paper.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Some respondents have drawn comparisons with similar subjects where modifications have been proposed, indicating that changes to Computing Science should take a similar approach.

'No changes have been proposed. As a very practical subject the timing to complete the course is even more tight than at N5. When you consider most of the practical is generally done in class and some pupils cannot work on it at home plus potential school closures and self isolating the course will be very tough to fully fulfil and so I feel pupils will be disadvantaged. To not make any alterations to practical or theory when it has been done in other subjects I feel is going to be a huge challenge for teachers and pupils.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I've not been able to progress in my learning since march so I have a lot of gaps in my learning. It is not fair to change other subjects and not computing science.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'A contingency to make aspects of the course optional questions in the exam in case of extended closures would be sensible. This might best be applied to the database topic which requires specialist software not easily accessible to pupils working from home.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

At Advanced Higher, respondents gave mixed feedback on the proposal to make no modification to course assessment at this SCQF level. However, some suggestions were made as to how to provide increased learning and teaching opportunities at Advanced Higher.

'The Advanced Higher course has a greater degree of self-study in many schools so could run with less modification. Again, the removal of the Computer Systems unit could be used to generate more time to focus on the other three units.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'I think that pupils are being disadvantaged by saying that no changes can be made when it is clear that changes are being made in several other subjects.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

In line with consultation feedback, the assignment and question paper components will both be modified to give an option to complete either the database or web sections.

Modification of the question paper:

Total marks — 80

The paper will be structured with sections for each area of the course.

Section 1 is mandatory and will consist of 55 marks from Computer Systems and SDD.

There will be a combination of short response questions and larger questions with more complex scenarios and multiple parts.

Section 2 will contain the optional database or web questions. Each will consist of 25 marks.

There will be a combination of short response questions and larger questions with more complex scenarios and multiple parts.

The question paper duration will be reduced to 1 hour 30 minutes (previously 2 hours).

Modification of the assignment:

Total marks — 40

The SDD task will be mandatory and remain unchanged (25 marks, 15 of these for implementation).

Candidates will have the option to complete the database or web task (each will be increased to 15 marks).

The time for completing the assignment will be reduced from 8 to 6 hours. Other conditions of assessment are unchanged.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Both the assignment and question paper components will be modified to provide an option to complete either the database or web sections.

Modification of the question paper:

Total marks — 80

The paper will be structured with sections for each area of the course.

Section 1 is mandatory and will consist of 55 marks from Computer Systems and SDD.

There will be a combination of short response questions and larger questions with more complex scenarios and multiple parts.

Section 2 will contain the optional database or web questions. Each will consist of 25 marks.

There will be a combination of short response questions and larger questions with more complex scenarios and multiple parts.

The question paper duration will be reduced to 2 hrs (previously 2.5 hrs)

Modification of the assignment:

Total marks — 40

The SDD task will be mandatory and remain unchanged (25 marks, 15 of these for implementation). Candidates will have the option to complete the database or web task (each 15 marks).

The time for completing the assignment will be reduced from 8 to 6 hours. Other conditions of assessment are unchanged.

At Advanced Higher:

The following content will not be assessed in 2020–21:

- ◆ Computer Systems
- ◆ Evaluation (SDD,WDD,DDD)

Modification of the question paper:

The question paper will be reduced to 70 marks.

Section 1 will be 15 marks; Section 2 will remain as four multiple-part questions worth a total of 55 marks.

There will be no Computer Systems nor Evaluation questions.

Modification of the project:

The project will be reduced to 75 marks.

The evaluation section will not be assessed and is therefore not required.

5.12 Dance

A total of 149 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Dance, contributing 0.98% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was for additional guidance and modification for centres for the practical activity.

There was broad support for the proposals as illustrated in the bar charts below.

70. National 5 Dance				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Dance in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		19.12%	13
2	Agree		26.47%	18
3	Neutral		32.35%	22
4	Disagree		16.18%	11
5	Strongly Disagree		5.88%	4
			answered	68

72. Higher Dance				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Dance in 2021?				

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		21.67%	13
2	Agree		36.67%	22
3	Neutral		20.00%	12
4	Disagree		20.00%	12
5	Strongly Disagree		1.67%	1
			answered	60

YOU SAID...

There was a relatively small volume of qualitative feedback on the proposed modifications to Dance. Respondents who did provide feedback were broadly supportive of the proposed approach, but also highlighted that there are general challenges around delivery particularly relating to difficulties with social distancing.

'It would be useful to have government guidelines on dancing in school in order to support the delivery of the course. Current guidelines state that Physical education is only allowed outdoors and there are no guidance in the expressive arts specific to dance. Private dance schools, studios and gyms are still closed with a preliminary opening of September 14th. If this is extended due to the virus this will impact the delivery of the practical elements of the course and could potentially negatively impact candidates. It might be helpful for centres to focus on the theory until practical activity is allowed indoors and safe dance practice can be adhered to.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I think that keeping the classes small in number will help with the social distancing aspect of Covid. Children can be assessed individually and film (with parental consent) for course work. Group work again can be filmed and used as evidence of the work, choreography, etc. Dancing with a partner, or close together in group work, should still be permissible although I am aware that the children may need to use masks as it may work in close proximity for more than 15min at a time (eg rehearsals). Thus can also be filmed as evidence.'

(Parent/ carer, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I think the solo choreography is a good idea. As far as I can see it is the safest. I think this will also need to be monitored for the reasons I noted above- pupils are still not allowed to do proper, warmed up, cardio intensive practical dance under school risk assessments.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Guidance for centres:

Guidance will be provided to centres on the use of suitable choreographic devices and spatial elements if social distancing is in place.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Guidance and modification for centres for the practical activity:

Candidates can continue to create a group choreography with a recommendation of no more than four dancers or alternatively, candidates can create a solo dance excluding themselves. If candidates choose a solo choreography, they will need to use a motif and develop this through the use of three complex devices to convey the choreographic intentions.

Whichever option is chosen will impact on the choreographic devices and/or spatial elements candidates choose. Guidance can be provided to centres on the use of suitable choreographic devices and spatial elements.

5.13 Design and Manufacture

A total of 596 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Design and Manufacture, contributing 3.92% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to adjust the conditions of assessment to allow candidates, with teacher or lecturer permission, to take their work home, when needed, if social distancing measures impact their class and school time.

Quantitative feedback from the consultation showed that there was no clear consensus on the proposal.

75. National 5 Design and Manufacture				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Design and Manufacture in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.32%	51
2	Agree		22.52%	75
3	Neutral		8.11%	27
4	Disagree		21.32%	71
5	Strongly Disagree		32.73%	109

75. National 5 Design and Manufacture

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Design and Manufacture in 2021?

		Response Percent	Response Total
		answered	333

77. Higher Design and Manufacture

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Design and Manufacture in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.54%	46
2	Agree		23.31%	69
3	Neutral		17.91%	53
4	Disagree		14.53%	43
5	Strongly Disagree		28.72%	85
			answered	296

79. Advanced Higher Design and Manufacture

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Design and Manufacture in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.21%	33
2	Agree		17.97%	39
3	Neutral		40.09%	87
4	Disagree		7.83%	17
5	Strongly Disagree		18.89%	41
			answered	217

YOU SAID...

Respondents provided qualitative feedback indicating that they did not feel that the proposed modifications were significant enough to provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'This approach would disadvantage young people from less stable backgrounds as they may not have access to an adequate space, resources or have the required independent motivation to tackle this work at home. There will also be the issue of work being lost in transit and pupils ending up with no evidence.'

'Why can this course not be brought in line with the Higher? Remove the practical element and concentrate on the design process and commercial manufacturing.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Where there was disagreement with the proposed modification, this often related to concerns about how to ensure the integrity of the assignment if candidates can take work home.

'I disagree with allowing pupils to take their work home as this could result in work being lost or could facilitate plagiarism, which compromises the validity of the assessment.'

'The access to, and amount of practical work that can be completed in this climate is greatly reduced. Pupils are going to be far less prepared for their course assessment compared to previous years. This needs to be reflected in how the assignment: practical is assessed this year.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Additionally, practitioners highlighted concerns over candidates having equitable access to resources, particularly where candidates are required to work from home.

'All modelling should be removed from the course, due use of shared resources and the inability to properly quarantine practical tools/ equipment or ensure tools / equipment are properly sterilised -the suggested 72 hour quarantine is impractical, SSERC recommendation is a slower pace to learning to accommodate one to one learning therefore increasing time to complete tasks. folio work being done at home will reduce departments ability to guarantee the independence of students work.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Concerns are for practical side of course if unable to access equipment tools etc because of social distance or lockdown.'

(Parent/ carer, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Respondents have highlighted the need to consider removing content across the levels to increase learning and teaching time.

'Final model for the assignment needs to be removed due to restrictions and protocols in the workshop. The pupils would need a good amount of time to be in the workshop when it comes to that part of the assignment and I cannot guarantee to the pupils that they will get that time.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'The assignment could be shortened by removing the research stage at the start. In previous years this stage was given, along with a specification and candidates began with generating ideas.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the assignment:

Currently 8 marks are available at the beginning of the Assignment: Design for 'analysing the brief', where candidates are required to:

- ◆ carry out research into a range of issues appropriate to the brief, using appropriate research and techniques (5 marks)
- ◆ complete the specification using the information gained from the research (3 marks)

Our proposal is that the first part of this work is provided by SQA and included in the published candidate assessment task for diet 2021, meaning that the candidates would all begin by using the research provided to complete their specification.

This would reduce the marks available for this component from 55 to 50.

In addition to that we propose to remove Component 3, Assignment: Practical which is worth 45 marks.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the assignment to:

Currently 5 marks are available for 'Carry out research into a given brief'.

For Diet 2021, SQA will produce this research, and include this in the published candidate assessment task, meaning that the candidates will all begin by using the research provided to complete their specification.

This will reduce the volume of work that candidates are required to produce for their assignment. Candidates spend a lot of time on research therefore providing it to them will free up learning and teaching time.

Currently 8 marks are available for practical modelling skills. We will remove the requirement to construct a practical model from the assignment. This will reduce the marks available for this component from 90 to 77.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

Optionality will be introduced into Section 1 of the question paper. Candidates will respond to either question 1 (Product analysis) or question 2 (Product evolution). This would reduce the marks available in the question paper from 80 to 65 and free up learning and teaching time.

Modification of the assignment:

The last section of the assignment is ‘Manufacture a presentation model’ which is worth 12 marks. The requirement for candidates to do this part of the assignment will be removed. This will reduce the marks available from 120 to 108.

5.14 Drama

A total of 685 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Drama, contributing 4.50% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposed modification was to provide guidance to centres on the performance, at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher.

The quantitative feedback indicated a broad agreement with the proposal, as illustrated by the bar charts below.

82. National 5 Drama				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Drama in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		12.36%	45
2	Agree		34.07%	124
3	Neutral		19.51%	71
4	Disagree		23.90%	87
5	Strongly Disagree		10.16%	37
			answered	364

84. Higher Drama				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Drama in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		9.86%	34
2	Agree		33.91%	117
3	Neutral		18.26%	63
4	Disagree		24.35%	84
5	Strongly Disagree		13.62%	47

84. Higher Drama

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Drama in 2021?

	Response Percent	Response Total
	answered	345

86. Advanced Higher Drama

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Drama in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		10.25%	29
2	Agree		27.56%	78
3	Neutral		34.98%	99
4	Disagree		18.37%	52
5	Strongly Disagree		8.83%	25
			answered	283

YOU SAID...

There was broad agreement with the proposed modifications for Drama, with respondents indicating that they felt the modifications were appropriate and maintained the standards of the qualification.

'The changes to the practical exam are minimal. I believe that they are measured and allow the qualification to feel rigorous. The 'sense of occasion' has been maintained and I know that the exam feeling like a formal performance is very important to my candidates.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I believe that the changes are positive in that it helps to protect the candidates and allows for the practical assessments to continue. Agree with make-up and hair decision.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I think it is well covered with the proposed changes.'

(Practitioner, Independent state school, Higher)

'An appropriate and measured response to the circumstances we find ourselves in.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Even where there was agreement with the proposal, respondents have indicated that social distancing would make any performance-based assessment challenging. Some respondents have asked if alternatives can be considered.

'Absolutely agree with proposals unfortunately the school my daughter attends has chosen to drop hair and make up , which I completely understand however this would be the area my daughter would focus on . Hopefully she can resume this in s6 . Priority is keeping children safe.'

(Parent/ carer, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'The marking criteria will need to be altered due to physical distancing for acting candidates. Candidates will not be able to use their voice/movement in the same way they usually would and the marking criteria needs to reflect that in order to not disadvantage candidates.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'Allow for Performances and dress rehearsal to be Recorded to use for exam purpose. There may be problems getting assessor into schools, or having enough assessors.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Guidance for centres on the performance:

Centres should consider the text(s) chosen, to minimise the physical interactions between candidates. All production roles should be achievable with correct risk assessment and cleaning regimes, except for Make-up and Hair. Make-up and Hair should only be offered by centres if government health advice at the time allows. Alternatively, we would recommend that centres do not present this option.

We recommend that no more than five candidates should be in each interactive piece. Centres should follow government health advice with regards to an appropriate audience. Alternatively, it would be acceptable that the audience consist only of the visiting assessor and the centre assessor.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher and Advanced Higher:

Guidance for centres on the performance:

Centres should consider the text(s) chosen, to minimise the physical interactions between candidates. All production roles should be achievable with correct risk assessment and cleaning regimes, except for Make-up and Hair. Make-up and Hair should only be offered by

centres if government health advice at the time allows. Alternatively, we would recommend that centres do not present this option.

We recommend that no more than five candidates should be in each interactive piece. Centres should follow government health advice with regards to an appropriate audience. Alternatively, it would be acceptable that the audience consist only of the visiting assessor and the centre assessor.

5.15 Economics

A total of 122 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Economics, contributing 0.80% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposed modifications were to National 5 and Higher and were to inform centres of sub-topic areas of content that would not be directly assessed in 2021. No modifications were proposed at Advanced Higher.

Quantitative responses to this proposal were broadly positive as the bar charts below indicate.

89. National 5 Economics				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Economics in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		27.66%	13
2	Agree		40.43%	19
3	Neutral		12.77%	6
4	Disagree		10.64%	5
5	Strongly Disagree		8.51%	4
			answered	47

91. Higher Economics				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Economics in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		26.67%	12
2	Agree		44.44%	20
3	Neutral		13.33%	6
4	Disagree		8.89%	4

91. Higher Economics

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Economics in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
5	Strongly Disagree		6.67%	3
			answered	45

93. Advanced Higher Economics

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Economics in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		27.59%	8
2	Agree		48.28%	14
3	Neutral		17.24%	5
4	Disagree		6.90%	2
5	Strongly Disagree		0.00%	0
			answered	29

YOU SAID...

There was also a low volume of qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject. Respondents indicated a good level of support for the proposal and felt this adjustment could free up learning and teaching time while maintaining the standard of the qualification.

'Removal of sub-topics would release time for more in depth learning and teaching.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Some respondents have indicated that more significant changes, should be considered, with the removal of the assignment most frequently mentioned. Many respondents felt that this would bring Economics into alignment with other courses in similar sectors.

'The coursework should not be required. It does not lend itself to a blended approach as advice and guidance is better delivered face to face. Often pupils require training in research skills and on the requirements for the coursework. It would be far easier to direct pupils towards further learning/revision for an examination. Assessment validity issues if completed out of class.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I feel that for Economics must be the same as Accounting - the assignment needs removed. The whole premise of this exercise is to free up learning and teaching time, and conducting the assignment does not achieve this. Furthermore, allowing to be conducted at home opens up issues with the validity of the assignment. This will put extra pressure on teachers to put in place processes to check that the work is the pupils (which is not acceptable). Removing the assignment will free up time to fully cover the course content without the need for changes to the final exam. If the SQA decide to keep the assignment, then centres will need to know what will not feature ASAP so we can plan accordingly.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I think removal of the Assignment would have helped more. Any arrangements which allow candidates to complete any aspect of the Assignment out with the classroom removes integrity. Economics is mainly theory based and the majority of our learners coped really well working at home with online support - not sure they would cope as well at home with the Assignment.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID....

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Modifications across the course assessment:

Centres will be informed of sub-topic areas of content that will not be directly assessed in 2021. Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. Teachers and lecturers will be aware of the sub-topic areas/themes that will not feature in the question paper for 2021 and will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery and any internal assessment of these sub-topics and themes.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21.

Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modifications across the course assessment:

Centres will be informed of sub-topic areas of content that will not be directly assessed in 2021. Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. Teachers and lecturers will be aware of the sub-topic areas/themes that will not feature in the question paper for 2021 and will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery and any internal assessment of these sub-topics and themes.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21.

At Advanced Higher:

Feedback from the consultation highlighted a need to make some adjustment to the volume of content to be covered in Advanced Higher.

Modification of the question paper:

Centres will be notified of the broad macroeconomic topics that will be covered in the examination in 2021.

5.16 Engineering Science

A total of 283 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Engineering Science, contributing 1.86% of the total responses to the consultation. There were originally no modifications proposed for National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher Engineering Science.

The response rate to the proposed modifications for this subject was quite low but, there was disagreement with this approach. As illustrated by the bar charts below.

96. National 5 Engineering Science					
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Engineering Science in 2021?					
				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree			12.59%	17
2	Agree			16.30%	22
3	Neutral			14.81%	20
4	Disagree			25.93%	35
5	Strongly Disagree			30.37%	41
				answered	135

98. Higher Engineering Science					
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Engineering Science in 2021?					
				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree			12.80%	16
2	Agree			15.20%	19
3	Neutral			19.20%	24
4	Disagree			22.40%	28

98. Higher Engineering Science				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Engineering Science in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
5	Strongly Disagree		30.40%	38
			answered	125

100. Advanced Higher Engineering Science				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Engineering Science in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		13.86%	14
2	Agree		9.90%	10
3	Neutral		39.60%	40
4	Disagree		13.86%	14
5	Strongly Disagree		22.77%	23
			answered	101

YOU SAID...

There was also a low volume of qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject. Where there was feedback, respondents indicated that to make no modifications would be unfair to candidates.

'The fact that there is no modification to the course is unreasonable for this subject due to the fact some programmes can only be accessed in school. Removal of sections of the course that require software and materials would make it more fair to all pupils.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'The proposed approach should be modified to take account of the extraordinary circumstances which the country is facing. Not only did we have to educate during lockdown - which seriously (and inconsistently) affected the pace of learning, but the attendance rate throughout the rest of the year is going to be down. When I say inconsistently I mean that schools that cater for deprived areas, will have progressed at a slower pace than schools at the other end of the SIMD. Delivering the same curriculum, and administering the same assessment, is not fair.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Some respondents have asked if the size and scale of the assignment could be reviewed, expressing concern over how to successfully deliver the assignment in the restricted time available.

'I am concerned that there will not be enough time to cover all the content necessary to complete the course.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Concerned about lost time, with the potential to lose more, and the impact this will have on the pupils opportunities to develop a depth of knowledge. Time to deliver the course prior to assignment deadlines is already quite tight.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

In line with consultation feedback, we will withdraw the more time-consuming course assessment component as a means of creating more time for learning and teaching (by removing the time required to undertake and assess that component).

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the project:

The coursework component (project) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

5.17 English

A total of 4,376 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to English, contributing 28.76% of the total responses to the consultation. Our original proposals were to make modifications to course assessment at National 5 and Higher. No modifications were proposed at Advanced Higher.

There was broad support for the proposed modifications for English, particularly at National 5 and Higher level, as is illustrated by the bar charts below.

103. National 5 English

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 English in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		31.79%	654
2	Agree		32.18%	662
3	Neutral		16.29%	335
4	Disagree		10.99%	226
5	Strongly Disagree		8.75%	180
			answered	2,057

105. Higher English

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher English in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		32.92%	689
2	Agree		30.86%	646
3	Neutral		14.09%	295
4	Disagree		11.13%	233
5	Strongly Disagree		10.99%	230
			answered	2,093

107. Advanced Higher English

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher English in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		19.17%	281
2	Agree		24.01%	352
3	Neutral		38.27%	561
4	Disagree		9.21%	135
5	Strongly Disagree		9.35%	137
			answered	1,466

YOU SAID...

Many respondents indicated that they were happy with the approach proposed, citing that it would assist practitioners in making the most of the learning and teaching time available to them. This was a view held by a range of respondents, as illustrated below.

'The proposed modifications would give us learning and teaching time that we sorely need this year.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Reducing Folio and Assessment such as spoken language, will definitely help with the delivery of course content and more time after prelim to concentrate on revision, as opposed to finalising two folio pieces.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I think that the removal of the speaking was the right approach, I also think that the portfolio shortage was also needed.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I agree that the removal of the talk assessment allows teachers more time to deliver the course in good depth. I also agree that the reduction of folio pieces is a similarly better use of (precious) teaching time.'

(Practitioner, Local Authority, Higher)

A number of respondents who supported the proposal said they felt the modifications proposed to English provided the opportunity for candidates to make up time lost during lockdown. They also felt that the proposal provides some reassurance should lockdown restrictions be reintroduced.

This seems a sensible adjustment to the course, although I don't know enough about the teaching of English to know exactly how much additional time for teaching and learning this will free up. Hopefully enough to compensate for disruption due to loss of teaching time when schools were closed before the summer, loss of teaching time due to changes in school routines to minimise risk of infection (e.g. time to disinfect desks and seats), loss of personalised teaching due to teachers maintaining social distance, possible loss of teaching time if pupils have to self-isolate or schools have local lockdown.

(Parent/ carer, Independent school)

Removing the one writing would provide time in classes to focus on the exam content and removing the speaking exam would reduce stress of working in groups or practicing anything with the teacher having to be at a distance.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school)

Respondents raised concerns that no change was proposed to Advanced Higher English. Whilst some acknowledged that there is a degree of independent study required but felt that these learners have still been impacted and therefore similar proposals should be made at Advanced Higher level.

‘Regardless of the ‘independent’ nature of the course the removal of one writing piece would seem fairer at this time. Pupils time has been constrained as much as teachers’ in this regard’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

‘Although this course usually promotes and encourages self-study relating to those methods used at university level, pupils who are taking this course are experiencing just as much disruption to their learning as pupils in the same subject at higher and national 5 levels. Therefore, I believe these students should not be more disadvantaged by these changes to normal schooling and should be considered for adjustments similar to, or the same as, the rest of the English courses.’

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Modification across the course assessment:

- ◆ removal of Performance–spoken language as a mandatory component for session 2020–21
- ◆ reduce the Portfolio–writing to one piece (either broadly creative or broadly discursive). Retain the 30% weighting

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification across the course assessment:

- ◆ removal of Performance–spoken language as a mandatory component for session 2020–21
- ◆ reduce the Portfolio–writing to one piece (either broadly creative or broadly discursive). Retain the 30% weighting

At Advanced Higher:

We have made the changes to Advanced Higher English to maintain equity across SQA National Courses, and to address some concerns raised in the consultation about the impact of lost teaching and learning time in session 2020–21.

Modification of component 3: portfolio–writing:

For session 2020–21, the portfolio–writing will contain one piece of writing (from any genre). The expectation is that this modification will free up more time for teaching and learning and, given the circumstances this session, allow for realistic levels of independent or self-directed learning.

The portfolio–writing piece will be marked out of 15, but the 30% weighting for this component will remain. The advice on length of the piece of writing remains the same, with no word count, but it should be appropriate to purpose and genre.

The portfolio–writing will be submitted to SQA for external marking. All current conditions of assessment remain unchanged.

5.18 English for Speakers of Other Languages

A total of 69 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to English for Speakers of Other Languages, contributing 0.45% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to provide guidance to centres on the volume, type and approach to be used in gathering evidence to support teachers and lecturers in either a face-to-face or remote situation. However, no modifications were proposed at either National 5 or at Higher.

The response rate for this subject was low, but quantitative responses to this proposal were broadly positive, as the bar charts below indicate.

110. National 5 English for Speakers of Other Languages				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 English for Speakers of Other Languages in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		23.33%	7
2	Agree		30.00%	9
3	Neutral		36.67%	11
4	Disagree		6.67%	2
5	Strongly Disagree		3.33%	1
			answered	30

112. Higher English for Speakers of Other Languages				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher English for Speakers of Other Languages in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		25.81%	8

112. Higher English for Speakers of Other Languages

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher English for Speakers of Other Languages in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
2	Agree		29.03%	9
3	Neutral		35.48%	11
4	Disagree		6.45%	2
5	Strongly Disagree		3.23%	1
			answered	31

YOU SAID:

There was also a low volume of qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject. Broadly, qualitative feedback indicates a good level of support for the proposal, and practitioners were particularly supportive of the rationale behind this approach.

'I will look forward to the provision of guidance and hope it is thorough and clear.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Good to keep in line with other second language courses.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I agree that we don't want ESOL to lose its accreditation in line with other language courses.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'No change would be good.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID:

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Provision of guidance to centres on:

The volume, type and approach to gathering of evidence to support teachers and lecturers in either a face-to-face or remote situation.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Provision of guidance to centres on:

The volume, type and approach to gathering of evidence to support teachers and lecturers in either a face-to-face or remote situation.

5.19 Environmental Science

A total of 166 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Environmental Science, contributing 1.09% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal at National 5 involved a reduction of the length of the examination to pre-2018 length. The original proposal at Higher involved a reduction in duration of the current question paper 2, with two options offered on how to do this.

There was a strong level of disagreement on this approach as illustrated in the bar charts below.

115. National 5 Environmental Science				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Environmental Science in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		6.85%	5
2	Agree		17.81%	13
3	Neutral		26.03%	19
4	Disagree		16.44%	12
5	Strongly Disagree		32.88%	24
			answered	73

117. Option 1: Higher Environmental Science				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Environmental Science in 2021, as outlined in Option 1?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.66%	13
2	Agree		13.25%	11

117. Option 1: Higher Environmental Science

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Environmental Science in 2021, as outlined in Option 1?

			Response Percent	Response Total
3	Neutral		26.51%	22
4	Disagree		18.07%	15
5	Strongly Disagree		26.51%	22
			answered	83

119. Option 2: Higher Environmental Science

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Environmental Science in 2021, as outlined in Option 2?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.22%	6
2	Agree		10.96%	8
3	Neutral		23.29%	17
4	Disagree		24.66%	18
5	Strongly Disagree		32.88%	24
			answered	73

YOU SAID...

Respondents indicated strongly that the proposed modification was not significant enough to increase learning and teaching time. Neither option at Higher received particular support from respondents who felt that the modification to the question paper was unlikely to assist teachers and may disadvantage learners.

'Reducing the length of the exam without removing any content does not reduce any pressures on practitioners or candidates. We still have to teach all of the content and have already lost teaching time and may lose more over the year. For candidates this actually increases pressure as they have the same volume of content but less marks available to demonstrate their knowledge. Effectively they could be learning topics which are not assessed or barely assessed in the final exam.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Decreased the length of the exam will have no effect on the limit to teaching at the moment. Neither option at Higher is helpful. Assignment should be removed, especially as practical aspects at the moment are either not able to be done or are very limited!'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Does not make any sense to just shorten exam, this is not removing course content so pupils still have to learn and fully understand all aspects which is challenging for them to do due to lost time.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

A large proportion of respondents have proposed that the assignment should be removed. They indicated it would be difficult to deliver such assessment in the current circumstances, due to social distancing requirements and time already lost due to national lockdown.

'Currently the practical aspect of the assignment is not possible in centres and we have no indication of if and/or when this could happen. The assignment should be temporarily removed for session 20/21 and reinstated if possible next year. A similar skill set could be assessed in a small paper based on the analytical skills required to successfully complete the assignment.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Removing the coursework element would allow teachers to prepare candidates for a full exam, reduce pressure and health and safety concerns re: running practical safely and give an even playing field should local lockdowns be enforced.'

(Practitioner, Independent state school, National 5)

'Proposed approach would be of no benefit. Assignment should be scrapped this year with practical carried out by each individual pupil pretty impossible at the moment. This would also give us time to cover content as time was lost during lockdown.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper:

The format and the length of the question will not be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions, will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

The format and the length of the question will not be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

5.20 Fashion and Textile Technology

A total of 142 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Fashion and Textile Technology, contributing 0.93% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to modify the assignment at both National 5 and Higher.

The response rate to this subject was low, and quantitative feedback from the consultation made it clear that there was no clear consensus on the proposal.

122. National 5 Fashion and Textile Technology				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Fashion and Textile Technology in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.85%	13
2	Agree		28.05%	23
3	Neutral		17.07%	14
4	Disagree		18.29%	15
5	Strongly Disagree		20.73%	17
			answered	82

124. Higher Fashion and Textile Technology				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Fashion and Textile Technology in 2021?				

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.07%	11
2	Agree		26.03%	19
3	Neutral		20.55%	15
4	Disagree		15.07%	11
5	Strongly Disagree		23.29%	17
			answered	73

YOU SAID...

There was also a low volume of qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject. Respondents who provided comment indicated that even where they were supportive of the proposal, they felt that the modification may not be significant enough and suggested that additional modifications could be made.

'I welcome the reduction in the number of investigations to be carried out and the removal of the plan of work. I think the changes should also relate to the practical component of the subject which is the area that has been most affected by school closures. Pupils have missed three months of having the opportunity to develop textile skills in school. This component could not be delivered at home which will impact on the quality and finish of items produced.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I worry that there is still too much content to cover and it will be very stressful for both staff and students.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Some respondents felt that modifications should be made to the practical element of the course assessment, which would be difficult to deliver given social distancing requirements. Practitioners noted their concern that this was unfair on candidates who have had limited support from teaching professionals.

'The modifications that have been set to the course assignment seem fair, however there is no mention of the practical element which needs to be greatly reviewed as candidates will not be given a fair learning experience with teachers not being allowed to go near pupils to assist / support on sewing machines difficult / potential closures of school meaning distance learning may need to occur. Smaller more manageable items may need to be made in relation to the given situation.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'We missed a month of sewing which means that they should simplify the garment and we would not have supported study.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I feel that as pupils have had less time and restricted and limited support from teaching professionals their skills and abilities will be drastically diminished and this should be reflected in the assessment of their practical skills.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the modifications have been amended and will be implemented as follows:

At National 5:

Component 1: question paper

There are no changes proposed for the question paper for session 2020–21.

Component 2: assignment

Components 2 and 3 are currently inter-related and assessed using one activity.

For session 2020–21 only, components 2 and 3 are not inter-related and will be assessed separately.

Candidates will select from two briefs to base their assignment on, which will be a written exercise only. This can be completed at any point in the session, enabling centres to work around restrictions.

Coursework briefs will be designed with target groups which candidates will be able to access easily.

- ◆ Stage 1(b) will remain as three investigations to allow candidates to generate sufficient information on which to base a design solution and justification within stage 1(c).
- ◆ Stages 1(d) (4 marks), 1(e) (3 marks) and 3(c) (3 marks) are being removed.
- ◆ This reduces the total mark for this component 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 3: practical activity

For the practical activity component, candidates will make one item, using eight different construction techniques. This is not linked to component 2 (assignment) and is to only assess practical techniques and abilities.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Component 1: question paper

There are no changes proposed for the question paper for session 2020–21.

Component 2: assignment

Components 2 and 3 are currently inter-related and assessed using one activity.

For session 2020–21 only, components 2 and 3 are not inter-related and will be assessed separately. only.

Candidates will select from two briefs to base the assignment on, which will be a written exercise only. This can be completed at any point in the session, enabling centres to work around restrictions.

Coursework briefs will be designed with target groups which candidates will be able to access easily.

- ◆ Stage 1(b) will remain as three investigations to allow candidates to generate sufficient information on which to base a design solution and justification within stage 1(c).
- ◆ Stages 1(d) (4 marks) and 1(e) (4 marks) are being removed.
- ◆ Stage 2(d), which links with 1(d), will be removed.
- ◆ There is a reduction in stage 3(a) to complete one test instead of two, which reduces this stage to 3 marks, instead of 6.
- ◆ Stage 3(b) has been reduced to 3 marks, instead of 6, as there is now only one test.
- ◆ This reduces the total mark for this component to 46 marks, instead of 60.

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 3: practical activity

For the practical activity component, candidates will make one item, using eight different construction techniques. This is not linked to component 2 (assignment) and is to only assess practical techniques and abilities.

Teachers and lecturers are required to record the practical mark in the same way and, with all candidates making the same item, this will reduce pressure on learning and teaching time.

- ◆ Stage 2(b) (4 marks) will be removed.
- ◆ This reduces the total marks for this component to 36 marks, instead of 40.

Photographic evidence will be required for each of the eight construction techniques applied to the item being made.

Candidates can complete the practical activity component at any stage throughout the year to suit individual centre's needs.

Centres are required to provide evidence for skills that have been assessed in the practical activity to support a centre-generated mark. This evidence can be collected at any stage in the session, recognising that practical work in many centres is currently not allowed or severely restricted.

5.21 Gàidhlig

A total of 65 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Gàidhlig, contributing 0.43% of the total responses to the consultation. There were originally no modifications proposed for National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher.

The response rate for this subject was quite low, but there was disagreement with this approach. As is illustrated by the bar charts below.

127. National 5 Gàidhlig			Response Percent	Response Total
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Gàidhlig in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		0.00%	0
2	Agree		20.83%	5
3	Neutral		4.17%	1
4	Disagree		33.33%	8
5	Strongly Disagree		41.67%	10
			answered	24

129. Higher Gàidhlig			Response Percent	Response Total
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Gàidhlig in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		3.57%	1
2	Agree		17.86%	5
3	Neutral		7.14%	2
4	Disagree		32.14%	9
5	Strongly Disagree		39.29%	11
			answered	28

131. Advanced Higher Gàidhlig		
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Gàidhlig in 2021?		

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		9.09%	2
2	Agree		31.82%	7
3	Neutral		31.82%	7
4	Disagree		4.55%	1
5	Strongly Disagree		22.73%	5
			answered	22

YOU SAID...

There was a small number of respondents in this subject, but qualitative feedback indicated there was disagreement with the proposed approach. In some cases, comparisons were drawn with the proposed approach for other subjects with respondents calling for a more similar approach.

'The continued inclusion of the writing assignment for Gaidhlig (unlike the approach being adopted for Modern Languages) is, in my opinion, not an appropriate course of action.

The reasons given for its removal in Modern Languages are the exact same reasons it should be removed from Gaidhlig: we badly need class time to be focused on speaking and listening, especially given that the majority of GME pupils won't have used their Gaelic throughout lockdown.

The skills assessed by the writing assignment could be assessed as part of the literature component of the exam.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'As both modern language and Gaelic learners courses have both been stripped of the assignment - writing aspect to make more time for focusing on more important aspects of the course: reading, listening and speaking I do believe that it would be beneficial to take the assignment writing out of the Gaidhlig for the same reason. I have sat both National 5 and Higher Gaidhlig and I can say that the assignment took up a lot of time. I do not believe that the lack of the assignment would be detrimental to the full course and would not 'compromise national standards'. There are opportunities for pupils to display their writing in the exam and during class. Due to the ongoing pandemic, the added stress of researching and writing assignment will put unnecessary pressure on those who are desperately seeking to develop their skills after 5 months of broken education.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Some respondents called for the removal of the coursework component (the assignment) as a means of introducing increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

‘There is an awful lot of work involved in the assignment, for both the pupils and the teachers. I think that this time would be much better spent developing the pupils’ other skills. Pupils are likely to need a lot more time to focus on these skills this year, after having been away from a Gaelic classroom for so long. Writing could still be assessed in the literature section of the exam.’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the following modification has been introduced and will be implemented as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of assignment–writing:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the assignment–writing:

The coursework component (assignment–writing) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of question paper component 2:

Removal of the ‘Sgrìobhadh’ (Writing) element from this component, which currently covers ‘Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh’.

5.22 Geography/ Cruinn-eòlas

A total of 1,260 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Geography, contributing 8.28% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposed modification to Geography was to reduce content in the question papers at National 5 and Higher. At Advanced Higher, and to provide additional guidance to support centres for whom an organised fieldtrip will not be possible.

The proposed modifications to Geography received broad support from respondents, as illustrated in the bar charts below.

134. National 5 Geography				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Geography in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		22.30%	136

134. National 5 Geography

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Geography in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
2	Agree		36.23%	221
3	Neutral		16.39%	100
4	Disagree		13.61%	83
5	Strongly Disagree		11.48%	70
			answered	610

136. Higher Geography

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Geography in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		23.35%	138
2	Agree		31.81%	188
3	Neutral		17.26%	102
4	Disagree		14.72%	87
5	Strongly Disagree		12.86%	76
			answered	591

138. Advanced Higher Geography

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Geography in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		16.19%	68
2	Agree		30.00%	126
3	Neutral		41.90%	176
4	Disagree		7.62%	32
5	Strongly Disagree		4.29%	18
			answered	420

YOU SAID...

The majority of respondents were supportive of the proposed modifications to Geography.

'You have made a concerted effort to show flexibility in all papers/skills to allow more developed learning and teaching to take place, getting the best out of pupils. I welcome these changes and the rationale behind them. This will still give pupils an excellent/all-round Cruinn-Eolas experience, covering all skills and contexts, whilst not over-stressing them to put all their efforts into assessment.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Whilst broadly supportive of the proposals, many respondents felt that the modifications did not go far enough and indicated that modifications should be made to the assignment since social distancing rules and restrictions over sharing materials would make delivery of this component challenging.

'Assignment will be almost impossible. We cannot at present go on field trips, cannot share equipment, do not have enough access to ICT for desk-based research and do not use (have) textbooks.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Could consideration be given to removing the assignment? This is a unit of work that has not been covered yet.'

(Parent/ carer, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'We welcome reduction in content coverage. However, we most definitely do not agree with keeping the assignment. We propose getting rid of the assignment to allow schools to cover content for the final exam. Schools do not have enough time to deliver all the necessary content and produce assignments. There will not be fieldwork opportunities so that disadvantages pupils in the completion of assignments and will reduce even further the teaching time schools have to deliver the course for final exam.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

A number of practitioners indicated that they were comfortable with no modifications being made to Advanced Higher Geography, citing that it was still possible to deliver the course in its current form.

'Totally agree. AH Geography works well as it is and is easily transferable to blended or lockdown learning. Local fieldwork is still possible and there are myriad valid secondary data sources.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'We agree with the proposals for AH Geography and understand the rationale outlined in the document. We would point out that we need the guidance regarding field work as soon as is possible.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Consultation feedback indicated that reducing content in the question paper will reduce the teaching and learning time required. The reduction in knowledge and understanding will be relatively small and there will be no reduction in skills, since the skills are assessed on other questions in the paper. The question papers would still be valid since the range of knowledge, understanding and skills remaining align with the aims, purpose and knowledge, skills and understanding detailed in the course specification.

In addition, consultation feedback indicated a need to remove the coursework component (assignment).

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Consultation feedback indicated that reducing content in the question paper will reduce the teaching and learning time required. The reduction in knowledge and understanding will be relatively small and there will be no reduction in skills, since the skills are assessed on other questions in the paper. The question papers would still be valid since the range of knowledge, understanding and skills remaining align with the aims, purpose and knowledge, skills and understanding detailed in the course specification.

In addition, consultation feedback indicated a need to remove the coursework component (assignment).

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the project-folio:

We will produce guidance to support centres in delivery of the project-portfolio. We will inform centres of some techniques which will not be assessed in the question paper.

We are proposing no changes to the structure and volume of course assessment.

5.23 Graphic Communication

A total of 728 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Graphic Communication, contributing 4.78% of the total responses to the consultation. There were originally no modifications proposed for National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher Graphic Communication.

The response rate to the proposed modifications for this subject was quite low, but there was disagreement with this approach. As illustrated by the bar charts below

141. National 5 Graphic Communication

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Graphic Communication in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		11.76%	44
2	Agree		16.04%	60
3	Neutral		17.38%	65
4	Disagree		17.11%	64
5	Strongly Disagree		37.70%	141
			answered	374

143. Higher Graphic Communication

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Graphic Communication in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		13.25%	44
2	Agree		14.46%	48
3	Neutral		16.27%	54
4	Disagree		17.17%	57
5	Strongly Disagree		38.86%	129
			answered	332

145. Advanced Higher Graphic Communication

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Graphic Communication in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		11.54%	30
2	Agree		13.46%	35
3	Neutral		33.46%	87
4	Disagree		12.31%	32
5	Strongly Disagree		29.23%	76

145. Advanced Higher Graphic Communication

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Graphic Communication in 2021?

	Response Percent	Response Total
	answered	260

YOU SAID...

Respondents were not supportive of the approach proposed for Graphic Communication, drawing comparison with other subjects where modifications have been proposed.

'I am very concerned that no modifications have been proposed in Graphic Communication when most other subjects have modifications proposed to their assessment.'

'During the lockdown period it was difficult and sometimes impossible to teach some topics remotely. CAD modelling was not possible due to many candidates not having access to computers. In the event of a second wave I am very concerned about being able to teach Graphic Communication successfully, especially if this was to impact the assignments. I am also concerned about the amount of time available and the range of topics to be covered in preparation for the assignment and the exam.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Respondents expressed concern about the time that has been lost due to national lockdown and felt that modifications should be made to compensate for time that had been lost and to prepare in case schools were required to close again.

'No consideration of the impact of lost time and skills development to prepare pupils for the assignment. Assignment requires released earlier, more time given to give a better chance.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'There are no proposed changes. I agree with the rationale behind the exam and that the timed assessment needs to be done in school, due to the specific software required. Slightly worried that all this means it would be difficult to assess/ complete curriculum if schools are closed again.'

(Parent/ carer, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Some content needs removed this session due to reduction in time for T&L due to covid 19 and cleaning schedule pupils have to undertake every period.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the following modifications have been introduced and will be implemented as follows:

At National 5:

Modification to the question paper:

The topic area 'drawing standards, protocols and conventions' will be removed from the question paper. Implied knowledge of this will be evidenced through the assignment.

We are proposing removing 15 marks from the question paper; it will be out of 65 rather than 80 marks. The duration of the exam will decrease from 2 hours to 1 hour 40 minutes.

Modification of the assignment

The 2020 assignment will be reissued for session 2021 and it will be published as soon as administrative amends are made to it rather than at the end of January.

The standard National 5 coursework submission date will be moved to the same coursework submission date as Higher (usually after the Easter Holidays) to allow centres more flexibility.

The highly supervised assessment conditions, and the 8 hour time limit will remain in place (the assignment is designed to be completed in 8 hours and spending any further time on it could negatively impinge on the ability of candidates to undertake all learning and teaching required and prepare for the question paper). There are two new points of guidance:

1. Candidates can do thumbnail or sketching tasks from home if necessary, for example if a centre is closed due to a localised COVID-19 outbreak.
2. Candidates can spend additional time on the assignment if necessary, for example if a centre is closed due to a localised COVID-19 outbreak. It is down to the professional judgement of the centre to determine how much additional time is appropriate.

The course weighting will change to 62% question paper /38% assignment.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

We will remove 15 marks from the question paper, so it will be out of 75 rather than 90 marks. The duration of the exam will decrease from 2.5 hours to 2 hours.

The topic area 'Drawing standards, protocols and conventions' will be removed from the question paper, implied knowledge of this will be evidenced through the assignment.

Modification of the assignment:

The 2020 assignment will be reissued for session 2021 and it will be published as soon as administrative amends are made to it rather than at the end of January.

The highly supervised assessment conditions, and the 8 hour time limit will remain in place (the assignment is designed to be completed in 8 hours and spending any further time on it could negatively impinge on the ability of candidates to undertake all learning and teaching required and prepare for the question paper) but there are two new points of guidance:

1. Candidates can do thumbnail or sketching tasks from home if necessary, for example, if a centre is closed due to a localised COVID-19 outbreak.
2. Candidates can spend additional time on the assignment if necessary, for example, if a centre is closed due to a localised COVID-19 outbreak. It is down to the professional judgement of the centre to determine how much additional time is appropriate.

The course weighting will change to 58% question paper and 42% Assignment.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

The topic area 'Graphic communication as it impacts on our environment and society' will be removed from the question paper.

This will remove 10 marks from the question paper, so it will be out of 80 rather than 90 marks. This will reduce the question paper duration from 2.5 to 2 hours.

Modification of the project:

The analysis and research, the specification, Gantt chart preliminary planning and the evaluation tasks will be removed from the project.

This will remove 30 marks from the project to allow candidates to focus on practical work. This means that the marks allocated to the project will decrease from 90 to 60 marks.

The course weighting will change to 57% question paper (80 marks) / 43% project (60 marks).

5.24 Health and Food Technology

A total of 429 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Health and Food Technology, contributing 2.82% of the total responses to the consultation. The original modification was to include guidance on social distancing and reduce assessable content at National 5 and Higher. There was no modification proposed at Advanced Higher.

Quantitative responses show there was a mixed response to the proposed modifications, as illustrated in the bar charts below.

148. National 5 Health and Food Technology				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Health and Food Technology in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		13.30%	29
2	Agree		34.40%	75
3	Neutral		16.06%	35
4	Disagree		21.10%	46
5	Strongly Disagree		15.14%	33

148. National 5 Health and Food Technology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Health and Food Technology in 2021?

		Response Percent	Response Total
		answered	218

150. Higher Health and Food Technology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Health and Food Technology in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.31%	30
2	Agree		27.04%	53
3	Neutral		19.39%	38
4	Disagree		22.45%	44
5	Strongly Disagree		15.82%	31
			answered	196

152. Advanced Higher Health and Food Technology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Health and Food Technology in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.79%	21
2	Agree		23.31%	31
3	Neutral		40.60%	54
4	Disagree		13.53%	18
5	Strongly Disagree		6.77%	9
			answered	133

YOU SAID...

Qualitative responses indicated that respondents did not feel that the proposed modifications were significant enough to provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching. Many of them highlighted alternative approaches to modifications that they feel will provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

‘Assignment proposals very good however extremely concerned that the exam paper remains unchanged given the amount of time we have lost’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

‘The course content needs to be reduced to allow for the missed teaching time. A choice of questions in the exam may also be beneficial’

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

‘AH is very content heavy and some stream lining would be required if blended learning had to take place in the event of localized closures or another lockdown’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

Some respondents highlighted challenges arising from limitations of practical activity due to social distancing requirements, and on occasion suggested an alternative approach.

‘I agree that the briefs should have a target group identified so that investigations can be considered and that sensory testing can be completed. The final conclusions part is a repeat anyway so should be removed. Two investigations would be appropriate to ensure that candidates can carry out investigations whilst adhering to the covid rules. Practical element could be an issue if the school kitchen are still out of bounds’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

‘A choice of questions in the written paper should be offered. Keep a compulsory nutritional analysis question and then a selection of questions covering all course knowledge.’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

‘Shorten the assignment and/or the exam paper a lot more’

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

‘Would be good to have a bigger selection of questions to choose from to make sure there are options.’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the following modifications have been introduced and will be implemented as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper:

- ◆ Include optionality within Questions 3-6, where candidates can choose three questions out of four to attempt.
- ◆ Question 1 and 2 remain as mandatory and candidates must attempt these.

Modification of the assignment to:

- ◆ design the briefs with a target group.
 - ◆ reduce the number of investigations candidates must undertake in the assignment from three to two, and subsequently the number of linked justifications from eight to six.
- remove sections 3 and 4, to remove the need for a cooking method, sensory testing and evaluating, which all pose issues in the current situation around restrictions and lack of practical work in centres.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification to the question paper:

- ◆ Include optionality within Questions 2–5, where candidates can choose three questions out of four to attempt.
- ◆ Question 1 remains as mandatory and candidates must attempt this question.

Modification of the assignment to:

- ◆ design the briefs with a focus group.
 - ◆ reduce the number of investigations candidates must undertake in the assignment from three to two, and subsequently the number of linked justifications from ten to eight.
- remove sections 3 and 4, to remove the need for a cooking method, sensory testing and evaluating, which all pose issues in the current situation around restrictions and lack of practical work in centres.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

- ◆ Include optionality within the evaluation questions, where candidates can choose to attempt one 'evaluate' question out of two.

All other questions remain as mandatory and candidates must attempt these.

5.25 History / Eachdraidh

A total of 1,350 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to History, contributing 8.87% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to make some modifications at National 5 and Higher, but no changes at Advanced Higher.

The respondents were broadly supportive of this approach, as illustrated in the bar charts below.

155. National 5 History

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 History in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		21.04%	117
2	Agree		37.77%	210
3	Neutral		17.81%	99
4	Disagree		13.67%	76
5	Strongly Disagree		9.71%	54
			answered	556

157. Higher History

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher History in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		27.92%	146
2	Agree		38.05%	199
3	Neutral		16.63%	87
4	Disagree		11.28%	59
5	Strongly Disagree		6.12%	32
			answered	523

159. Advanced Higher History

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher History in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		17.91%	72
2	Agree		24.13%	97
3	Neutral		35.82%	144
4	Disagree		12.19%	49
5	Strongly Disagree		9.95%	40
			answered	402

YOU SAID...

Qualitative responses indicated that overall, there was broad support for the proposed approach in History. This was particularly clear at National 5 and Higher. Where there was

disagreement with the approach, respondents indicated that they did not believe that the proposed modifications were significant enough to provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'The inclusion of an extra question for each of British and European History is a reasonable approach, which allows for a reduction in the total content which must be covered for these topic areas. This compensates in a proportionate way for the loss of teaching time available due to Covid, whilst maintaining the overall integrity of the qualification.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Providing optional questions will help students who have not been at school for a third of 2019/20 school session, they have enough to catch up on and there is enough anxiety with exams as it is.'

(Parent / Carer, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I think that there could be a few more changes to the course'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Many respondents suggested changes to the removal of the assignment as a means to offset the disruption in learning and teaching time.

'Retaining the Assignment, for this session at least, is impractical and places incredible pressure on centres to try and not only cover content in an unprecedented timescale but also to get pupils through an additional obstacle.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'The Assignment remains to be the least equitable area of the National 5 course and if we end up adopting a system of blended learning in the near future, this will only serve to widen the attainment gap further. Not all pupils will be able to access good quality resources from home and there are Covid restrictions on use of textbooks/ipads etc in schools. The time would be better served getting up to date with missed areas of the course due to lockdown/missed teaching opportunities.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Some fields of study could be made so that they will not be sampled in this year's exams to help bridge the attainment gap between deprived schools and affluent schools, as more people in deprived areas found it more difficult to work in the course in June which is normally the case, so it could be harder to cover everything.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Some respondents highlighted that the volume of course content at Advanced Higher would make it challenging to deliver the course and for candidates to undertake the assessment without more significant modification.

'Advanced higher is the most difficult of the three and as such takes the most time to teach/learn. Although the onus is on the student to learn independently. Some consideration has to be taken for the fact that with no teacher input directly for a third of the year is going to have a massive impact on their knowledge by exam time. There is a massive amount of information that the kids have to learn in order to be able to complete the exam as well as different exam techniques all of which require teacher input. This lack of input so far will seriously impair their ability to complete the course by the exam.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the following modifications have been introduced and will be implemented as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper:

The proposal is that for questions based on the fourth issue in Section 2 British and Section 3 European and world, there will be an optional question based on an earlier issue to recognise that some centres may be unable to complete the whole course if teaching is disrupted. Centres will also be informed of the order of the three sections that make up the question paper.

Centres will be provided with guidance to support them in the creation of assessments and prelims to reflect the specimen question paper for National 5.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

We propose sampling four of six key issues instead of three of six key issues in the British, European and world question paper. Candidates will choose one essay from a choice of four. Centres will be provided with guidance to support them in the creation of assessments and prelims to reflect the Higher specimen question paper.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

Centres will be informed of two areas/ key issues which will not be sampled in the question paper.

5.26 Human Biology

A total of 890 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Human Biology, contributing 5.85% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal involved a return to a single question paper and mark allocation, as pre-2018.

There was a strong level of disagreement with this approach as illustrated in the bar charts below.

162. Higher Human Biology				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Human Biology in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		9.43%	51
2	Agree		18.85%	102
3	Neutral		9.80%	53
4	Disagree		17.93%	97
5	Strongly Disagree		43.99%	238
			answered	541

YOU SAID...

Qualitative feedback indicated that respondents strongly disagreed with the proposed modification to the question paper.

'The proposed approach could make the paper more time pressured as we need to learn the same amount of content which will be in the paper but with less time to get through the questions. I would propose either removing the assignment or cutting some content from the course to make the sure the course can still be completed as time in class has already been shortened and further disruption could occur.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Strongly disagree, we should not do the assignment and instead do a normal length exam paper.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

A large proportion of respondents indicated that the assignment should be removed, citing the difficulty of delivering such assessment in the current circumstances, due to social distancing requirements and time already lost due to national lockdown.

'Removing the assignment for the upcoming year in my opinion would free up more time for learning, teaching & assessment of the course material. Precious time has been lost

already due to lockdown, time we will never get back. There are & will probably continue to be issues with the carrying out of practical work in schools due to COVID-19, an essential part of the assignment.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'The best way forward would be to cancel the assignment for one year and just have the exam Allows time to cover all course content and if had to move to distance learning can still be done whereas assignment can't be done from home.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Keeping the assignment will lose valuable teaching time. My S6 son is doing this as a crash Higher and I know that the course content will be more important than two weeks of research and write up under exam conditions.'

(Parent/ carer, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

Modification of the question paper:

The question papers will not be changed.

The format and the length of the question papers will **not** be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions, will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

5.27 Latin

A total of 94 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Latin, contributing 0.62% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal made no modification to Latin at either National 5 or Higher. At Advanced Higher, while no modification was suggested, it was proposed that new guidance would be provided for centres on common questions, and additional good practice guidance on the dissertation.

The response rate was relatively low in this subject, but quantitative feedback indicated that there was broad support for the approach to Latin.

165. National 5 Latin

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Latin in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		17.95%	7
2	Agree		38.46%	15
3	Neutral		20.51%	8
4	Disagree		7.69%	3
5	Strongly Disagree		15.38%	6
			answered	39

167. Higher Latin

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Latin in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		20.69%	6
2	Agree		31.03%	9
3	Neutral		17.24%	5
4	Disagree		17.24%	5
5	Strongly Disagree		13.79%	4
			answered	29

169. Advanced Higher Latin

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Latin in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		4.55%	1
2	Agree		31.82%	7
3	Neutral		36.36%	8
4	Disagree		9.09%	2
5	Strongly Disagree		18.18%	4
			answered	22

YOU SAID...

There was also a low volume of qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject. However, qualitative feedback indicated that while there was broad support for the proposed approach, respondents felt that it may not be significant enough to provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'I think that some aspect of the course should have been changed in order fit within the different context of this session. No change in the exam means business as usual for teaching, but that is going to be difficult to achieve.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Nothing has been taken out of the exam despite the time lost during lockdown.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'No change does mean time will be tight to cover the whole course in the depth required.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Some respondents suggested alternative approaches to modifying the course, for example by reducing the set texts. They felt this would maintain the standard and validity of the course while reducing the pressure on candidates.

'There should be a minimal reduction in set text. Such a reduction would not remove any skills development from learners but would ensure they have enough time to prepare for assessment with reduced teaching time.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

The original proposal did not include any modification at Advanced Higher. Respondents expressed broad disagreement with this approach and cited fairness for candidates as the primary reason for this.

'Several issues need to be addressed here to ensure parity for candidates.'

- 1. Volume of texts to be studied at AH level is always an issue, so in a time where class contact, or indeed contact with individuals may be severely restricted, a reduction in prescription for this year would be welcomed.*
- 2. Given this same issue of contact, it should be considered to suspend the introduction of verse translation for this year. This would be particularly valid, given that the verse paper is yet to be examined.*
- 3. Suggest that the Project-Dissertation element be removed for this year only; some pupils could be disadvantaged if they are relying on access to resources within school, and have fewer research facilities at home.*

We cannot rely on pupils having internet access at home if there is any type of isolation - needn't even be widescale, could be localised or even individual. Also, Latin resources could be considered as specialised. We are currently discouraged from sharing of

resources, so even access to books / resources within school setting is currently an issue. To ensure the sustainability of the subject and to encourage pupils to continue to AH Latin, it is vital that the subject is not seen as targeting independent schools only; ALL pupils from all sectors must have equity, and obviously, we do not want to see a repeat of recent mistakes based on SIMD.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the following modifications have been introduced and will be implemented as follows:

At National 5

To further support equity across qualifications in session 2020–21 only, the number of authors required to be answered on by candidates to be reduced from two to one. This could potentially reduce teaching and learning time.

Modification to the question paper:

Component 1 — Literary Appreciation question paper — candidates choose to answer on any two authors from a choice of five authors of the prescribed texts. For session 2020–21 only, candidates are required to answer on one author only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

To further support equity across qualifications in session 2020–21 only, the number of authors required to be answered on by candidates to be reduced from two to one. This could potentially reduce teaching and learning time.

Modification to the question paper:

Component 1 — Literary Appreciation question paper — candidates choose to answer on any two authors from a choice of five authors of the prescribed texts. For session 2020–21 only, candidates are required to answer on one author only.

At Advanced Higher:

To support equity across National Courses, we will remove the verse translating for session 2020–21 only to free up time for teaching and learning.

Modification of the question paper:

For session 2020–21 only, the removal of verse translating within the course assessment of component 2.

The recently developed common questions and additional good practice guidance (not yet finalised) on the dissertation should be helpful in providing enhanced guidance to candidates — this could potentially reduce teaching and learning time. Additional support in the

coursework assessment task for candidates may also potentially reduce reasonable assistance and supervision required.

5.28 Mathematics / Matamataigs

A total of 3,734 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Mathematics, contributing 24.54% of the total responses to the consultation. The original modification was to return the Mathematics question paper duration and structure to pre-2018 format for both National 5 and Higher. No modification was proposed at Advanced Higher.

Quantitative feedback from the consultation made it clear that there was no consensus on the proposal.

172. National 5 Mathematics				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Mathematics in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		16.17%	248
2	Agree		24.90%	382
3	Neutral		20.21%	310
4	Disagree		14.93%	229
5	Strongly Disagree		23.79%	365
			answered	1,534

174. Higher Mathematics				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Mathematics in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.12%	217
2	Agree		23.41%	336
3	Neutral		20.70%	297
4	Disagree		15.61%	224
5	Strongly Disagree		25.16%	361
			answered	1,435

176. Advanced Higher Mathematics

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Mathematics in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		13.50%	142
2	Agree		19.11%	201
3	Neutral		31.84%	335
4	Disagree		12.17%	128
5	Strongly Disagree		23.38%	246
			answered	1,052

YOU SAID...

Qualitative responses indicated that respondents did not feel that the proposed modifications were significant enough to provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'The issue for all my answers is that the proposals do not take account of proportionality in regard to lost teaching time. The concept of a 'recovery curriculum' and lack of reduction in curriculum coverage to be examined, are at odds with each other. The exams need to have some kind of option structure to make allowances for some children struggling to recover lost time/content. The pressure otherwise of pupils and staff is unrealistic.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'If the whole course is to be taught, the full exam length would surely reduce the burden on the pupils as they would know all aspects of the course are to be assessed. Now they have the added stress of needing to know everything but not knowing which parts will be assessed. Optionality or the full exam would appear to reduce the burden of stress on the pupils much more than the option chosen.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'The course work should be reduced in accordance with lack of class time due to lockdown and social distancing measures. Reducing the exam does not help account for lack of class time.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Respondents indicated that the original proposal would not allow enough time to deliver all of the content in the course. They proposed alternative modifications to course assessment for Mathematics, including introducing optionality to the question paper.

'There is simply not enough time to cover the content required for a final exam. The fact that the length of the assessment will be reduced has absolutely no impact on the content of the course. We lost at least 1 month of teaching time in June and still need to teach all content from the course as well as preparing pupils for exams. This means that content will need to be 'streamlined' for pupils, putting staff in an incredibly difficult position of choosing which topics to simply leave out or not teach in depth. I believe that all courses in Mathematics should have optional question sections added for the 2021 exam diet.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Higher Mathematics is a long course and learning that much while having missed so much time is too much pressure for students. removing something from the course or introducing optionality is the only way to reduce this pressure and stress.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Higher mathematics is one of the most difficult awards to achieve. Too many students are opting for softer Higher awards for university places as they are easier to achieve. Students are demonstrating their understanding throughout the session and then at the mercy of the unpredictable nature of a one off exam. There needs to be mechanisms in place to allow for Internally assessed unit performance and/or project work to count towards the achievement of the award. Failing that, optional question papers should be introduced to give an element of choice and to play to the strengths of less strong, but valid, Higher level candidates.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'By simply returning to a shorter exam it will not help whatsoever on potential loss to teaching time. I do not agree that it will help candidates in the exam and does not solve the main problem that will be the concern that teachers will struggle to teach the full curriculum under the current circumstances.'

(Parent/ carer, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Originally, there was no proposal to modify Advanced Higher Mathematics. In qualitative feedback, respondents broadly disagreed with this approach and felt that this was unfair on candidates.

'Pupils who are studying for a number of Advanced Highers only have an infinite capacity for self-directed study. Expecting them to do more of this for several subjects is unfair. Especially as some content from higher level may not be as secure as it would have been without the disruption to their learning and teaching due to COVID 19.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'No modifications have been proposed for advanced higher level. The difficulties associated with the pandemic should be acknowledged.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'Although I do understand the argument that Advanced Higher lends itself and encourages self study and independent learning, there is still going to be a reduction to the class teaching time this year so it is a shame that something cannot be done in order to mirror the disadvantages which the pupils will be facing this year.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the modifications have been amended and will be implemented as follows:

At National 5

Modification of the question papers:

Optionality has been introduced in both components of the assessment. Candidates will sit a number of mandatory questions and then have a choice of questions on one of two options. Each option represents a similar amount of learning and teaching time and will be of similar difficulty in the assessment. 20% of the total marks will be allocated to each optional section.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question papers:

Optionality has been introduced in both components of the assessment. Candidates will sit a number of mandatory questions and then have a choice of questions on one of two options. Each option represents a similar amount of learning and teaching time and will be of similar difficulty in the assessment. 20% of the total marks will be allocated to each optional section.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of question paper 2:

Given the duration and mark allocation in the first component, there is no optionality in paper 1. Optionality has been introduced in paper 2. Candidates will sit a number of mandatory questions and then have a choice of questions in one of two options. Each option represents a similar amount of learning and teaching time and will be of similar difficulty in the assessment. 16% of the total marks will be allocated to each optional section.

5.29 Mathematics of Mechanics

A total of 154 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Mathematics of Mechanics, contributing 1.01% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to make no modification in this subject.

Quantitative feedback from the consultation showed that there was no clear consensus on the proposal.

179. Advanced Higher Mathematics of Mechanics

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Mathematics of Mechanics in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		18.42%	14
2	Agree		34.21%	26
3	Neutral		11.84%	9
4	Disagree		13.16%	10
5	Strongly Disagree		22.37%	17
			answered	76

YOU SAID...

Respondents indicated a level of disagreement with this proposal, seeing this approach as unfair to candidates and not acknowledging the time that had been lost due to national lockdown.

'No modifications have been proposed for advanced higher level. The difficulties associated with the pandemic should be acknowledged.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'Pupils who are studying for a number of advanced highers only have an infinite capacity for self directed study. Expecting them to do more of this for several subjects is unfair. Especially as some content from higher level may not be as secure as it would have been without the disruption to their learning and teaching due to COVID 19.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

In some cases, respondents acknowledged the rationale behind the approach being taken, while indicating that some modifications should be made to provide opportunities for increased learning and teaching time.

'Although I do understand the argument that Advanced Higher lends itself and encourages self study and independent learning, there is still going to be a reduction to the class teaching time this year so it is a shame that something cannot be done in order to mirror the disadvantages which the pupils will be facing this year.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'You have not proposed any changes and therefore there will be no opportunity to increase teaching and learning.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the following modifications have been introduced and will be implemented as follows:

Modification of question paper 2:

Given the duration and mark allocation in the first component, there is no optionality in paper 1. Optionality has been introduced in paper 2. Candidates will sit a number of mandatory questions and then have a choice of questions in one of two options.

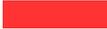
Each option represents a similar amount of learning and teaching time and will be of similar difficulty in the assessment. 16% of the total marks will be allocated to each optional section.

A minor adjustment to the length of the question paper has been introduced to accommodate this optionality.

5.30 Media

A total of 237 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Media, contributing 1.56% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposals were for modifications to both the question paper and assignment at National 5 and Higher.

There was broad support for this approach as illustrated by the bar charts below.

182. National 5 Media				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Media in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		26.27%	31
2	Agree		39.83%	47
3	Neutral		15.25%	18
4	Disagree		11.86%	14
5	Strongly Disagree		6.78%	8
			answered	118

184. Higher Media				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Media in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		25.66%	29
2	Agree		37.17%	42

184. Higher Media

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Media in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
3	Neutral		18.58%	21
4	Disagree		13.27%	15
5	Strongly Disagree		5.31%	6
			answered	113

YOU SAID...

Respondents were broadly supportive of the approach and felt that the removal of the key aspect 'Institutions' would provide greater opportunities for learning and teaching while maintaining the standard and validity of the qualification.

'The removal of questions on Institutions is a sensible one to allow teacher time to focus on other key aspects which pupils find to be slightly more accessible at this level.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Institutions will still need to be taught under the holistic nature of the subject - a teacher would automatically refer to the institutions in order to make sure pupils have a sound understanding of the text. The reduction in evaluation questions is welcome as this can be very time consuming and often repetitive for lower ability pupils.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'The choice of questions in paper one is a good idea. The candidates still get to showcase their knowledge and it allows centres to reduce texts covered and focus on the requirements of the course. Candidates enjoy the poster/advert/magazine comparison so I'm glad that is being left as it is. Candidates tend to perform well in that component. The reduction in the planning section in the Assignment also seems fair and sensible.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the modifications were amended and will be implemented as follows:

At National 5:

The final modification will make some adjustments to the assignment, as well as providing sampling information on the question paper in order to allow centres to focus their available

learning and teaching time on a narrower range of content, and to slightly reduce the volume of coursework evidence being produced by candidates.

Modification of the question paper:

The key aspect 'Institutions' will not be sampled in the 2021 question paper.

Modification of the assignment:

- ◆ assignment (Section 1: Planning) — reduce to four questions in total, by making the focus of question 2 on either internal and/or external institutions and by removing question 3.

Reduction of 5 marks for Section 1.

- ◆ assignment (Section 2: Development): Candidates will select **four** examples (instead of five) from their finished content that they think demonstrates an ability (or attempt) to create impact or convey connotations.

Reduction of 7 marks for Section 2.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper to:

Offer optionality between question 1 or question 2 in Section 1 of question paper 1. The proposal is that Candidates will only answer one of the two available questions.

Reduction of 20 marks in question paper 1 (from total of 50). The duration of the question paper (2 hours and 30 minutes) will also be reduced accordingly.

Modification of the assignment to:

- ◆ assignment (Section 1: Planning). Candidates will produce just **one** section on content research, instead of two.

Reduction of 5 marks.

- ◆ candidates will research production role(s) **and/or** institutional context.

Reduction of 5 marks.

5.31 Modern Languages

A total of 1,446 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Modern Languages, contributing 9.50% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposals were to remove the coursework component 4: Assignment: writing at both National 5 and Higher. There was no proposed modification at Advanced Higher.

There was strong agreement with the proposed modifications for Modern Languages across the three levels from the respondents as can be seen in the bar charts below.

187. National 5 Modern Languages

(Cantonese, French, Gaelic (Learners), German, Italian, Mandarin (simplified), Mandarin (traditional) Spanish, Urdu)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Modern Languages in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		43.23%	335
2	Agree		27.61%	214
3	Neutral		13.42%	104
4	Disagree		9.68%	75
5	Strongly Disagree		6.06%	47
			answered	775

189. Higher Modern Languages

(Cantonese, French, Gaelic (Learners), German, Italian, Mandarin (simplified), Mandarin (traditional) Spanish, Urdu)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Modern Languages in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		44.84%	317
2	Agree		27.44%	194
3	Neutral		13.15%	93
4	Disagree		8.06%	57
5	Strongly Disagree		6.51%	46
			answered	707

191. Advanced Higher Modern Languages

(Cantonese, French, Gaelic (Learners), German, Italian, Mandarin (simplified), Mandarin (traditional) Spanish, Urdu)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Modern Languages in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
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191. Advanced Higher Modern Languages

(Cantonese, French, Gaelic (Learners), German, Italian, Mandarin (simplified), Mandarin (traditional) Spanish, Urdu)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Modern Languages in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		25.84%	146
2	Agree		25.84%	146
3	Neutral		27.96%	158
4	Disagree		12.04%	68
5	Strongly Disagree		8.32%	47
			answered	565

YOU SAID...

Respondents were supportive of the proposals for Modern Languages and felt that this modification would provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'I think that this is the correct decision in that it does not compromise the integrity of the course work or the external exam but does cut down on teacher time in class preparing for and undertaking the assessment.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Agree with the aim of reducing burden on teachers and pupils by modifying assessment requirements.'

(Parent/ carer, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'The extra teaching and learning time the removal of the writing assignment would allow us would be most welcome.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'More teaching time to develop other skills.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I think that this will free up an immense amount of time to properly cover the course. The preparation work for the assignment takes a considerable time. I believe that it eats away from time teaching topic vocabulary, which I think can make other aspects of the course, in particular, listening, much more difficult.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

In response to the proposed approach for Advanced Higher, some respondents highlighted concerns around fairness for candidates at this level. Even where there was agreement with the rationale, practitioners still highlighted that it would be challenging to deliver the whole course and that it would be appropriate for modifications to be made accordingly.

'No change proposed as more independent learning is appropriate - still will be difficult to get through all the course work and assessments- think something should go to alleviate the burden of assessments to take the strain of our young people.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'I think there should have been some reduction in the burden of assessment for AH too. The folio is hugely time consuming for only 15% of the grade and could have been either sacrificed or curtailed this year.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'You should take out the written portfolio'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'I feel that some element of the AH course should be removed - for example the Portfolio - to allow more time for other course elements.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'There have been no reduction in the course to take into account reduced time and social distancing which is deeply unfair.'

(Parent/ carer, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was accepted and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Modifications to the course assessment:

The removal of the coursework component 4: Assignment–writing from the course assessment for session 2020–21 only. This will reduce the overall number of raw course assessment marks by 20.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modifications to the course assessment:

The removal of the coursework component 4: Assignment–writing from the course assessment for session 2020–21 only. This will reduce the overall number of raw course assessment marks by 20.

At Advanced Higher:

Candidates work independently to produce the portfolio and spend considerable time outside the classroom researching and analysing a number of sources in order to complete the final essay. In line with the consultation responses, the removal of the portfolio will mean increased learning and teaching time for other areas of the course. There will be more opportunities for learners to develop the skills of reading, listening and discursive writing, and when practising for the techniques and time management of assessment.

In addition, the removal of the portfolio will also provide teachers and lecturers with increased time to focus on the skill of talking and will provide greater preparation time for the performance–talking. Candidates will not require to discuss the portfolio in the performance–talking. Teachers and lecturers will also spend less time explaining the process and conditions of assessment of the portfolio and will not need to organise meetings with candidates to discuss progress. They will not be required to organise and package portfolio materials for submission to SQA.

Modification of the portfolio:

Coursework component 3: Portfolio will be removed from the course assessment for session 2020–21 only. This will reduce the number of course assessment marks by 30, with the revised overall total of 170 marks for course assessment in session 2020–21 only.

Modification of the performance–talking:

Component 4: length of performance–talking altered to 15–20 minutes for session 2020–21 only, to take account of the effect of removal of the portfolio (component 3) on the discussion in the performance–talking.

5.32 Modern Studies / Nuadh-eòlas

A total of 1,301 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Modern Studies, contributing 8.55% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposals for this subject involved modification to the level of optionality in questions papers at National 5 to Advanced Higher level.

There was broad agreement with the proposed modifications for Modern Studies across the three levels, as can be seen in the bar charts below.

194. National 5 Modern Studies		
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Modern Studies in 2021?		
	Response Percent	Response Total

194. National 5 Modern Studies

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Modern Studies in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		22.63%	122
2	Agree		31.17%	168
3	Neutral		17.07%	92
4	Disagree		15.40%	83
5	Strongly Disagree		13.73%	74
			answered	539

196. Higher Modern Studies

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Modern Studies in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		20.70%	113
2	Agree		36.45%	199
3	Neutral		18.50%	101
4	Disagree		12.45%	68
5	Strongly Disagree		11.90%	65
			answered	546

198. Advanced Higher Modern Studies

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Modern Studies in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		21.84%	83
2	Agree		26.32%	100
3	Neutral		40.00%	152
4	Disagree		5.79%	22
5	Strongly Disagree		6.05%	23
			answered	380

YOU SAID...

Qualitative responses indicated that there was broad agreement with both the proposed modifications and the rationale for these modifications. However, even where there was agreement, respondents indicated that they felt more could be done to provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'New choice element is a good addition however no changes to assignments mean that timing will still be an issue.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

The rationale makes sense and allows students and teachers to focus on deep understanding of fewer topics.'

(Parent/Carer, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I agree with offering more choice to candidates in the exam is a good thing. However, not making any changes to the assignment is worrying. Not every pupil has the same access to internet resources at home, which means they will be disadvantaged.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Given the emphasis on independent learning at this level, it is entirely reasonable that pupils would cover content at home if necessary and produce the dissertation which is sent away as is, rather than a N5 or Higher Assignment which needs to be produced and then memorised. Optionality in questions is welcomed.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Many respondents made alternative suggestions for different approaches to modifying both course assessment and question paper.

'Time would be far better spent working on exam skills rather than the Assignment as ICT provision may not be available this year to the same extent as in previous years. Pupils may not be able to carry out research to the same extent due to social distancing etc. Maintaining this component puts too much pressure on both pupils and staff.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I think the assignments should be removed due to the time lost during lockdown.'

(Parent/Carer, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I agree that greater choice and 'optionality' for pupils is necessary to enable them to tackle extended responses questions without being significantly disadvantaged by potential disruption to class based learning. However, I strongly feel that the assignment for both N5 and Higher MS should be scrapped to ensure that topics and skills are covered in sufficient depth.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Get rid of the assignment and take out content for the exam'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of question paper component:

In each option within each section, we will inform centres of sub-topic areas of content which will not be directly assessed in the 2021 question paper.

We will inform centres which section of the 8-mark 'explain' question will be in the question paper.

For each 6-mark 'explain' question there will now be a choice of two questions from which candidates choose one to answer.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21.

Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of question paper 1 component:

Increasing question choice in each section in question paper 1.

Section 1: increase in the number of extended-response questions from three to four.

Section 2: increase in the number of extended-response questions from two to three.

Section 3: increase in the number of extended-response questions from two to three.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

Providing question optionality for each topic area.

Within each section, each topic area will now contain a choice of two extended-response questions. Candidates will continue to answer two questions from separate topics.

5.33 Music

A total of 1,373 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Music, contributing 9.02% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposals were to the requirements for performance components and guidance to centres of the assignment at National 5 to Advanced Higher.

There was broad agreement with the proposed modifications for Music across the three levels from the respondents as can be seen in the bar charts below.

201. National 5 Music				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Music in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		20.61%	141
2	Agree		28.65%	196
3	Neutral		15.79%	108
4	Disagree		21.49%	147
5	Strongly Disagree		13.45%	92
			answered	684

203. Higher Music				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Music in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		20.27%	137
2	Agree		28.55%	193
3	Neutral		15.98%	108
4	Disagree		22.04%	149
5	Strongly Disagree		13.17%	89
			answered	676

205. Advanced Higher Music				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Music in 2021?				

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		19.86%	117
2	Agree		26.49%	156
3	Neutral		21.05%	124
4	Disagree		19.86%	117
5	Strongly Disagree		12.73%	75
			answered	589

YOU SAID...

The majority of respondents indicated that they were supportive of the proposed modifications to Music. However, even where there was support for the approach outlined, respondents highlighted the challenges faced due to current social distancing rules.

'I agree that having a reduced performance time as mentioned would help those who have not had access or still do not have access to the instruments that they play.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I agree that as practice and playing time since March may have hindered progress allowances need to be made.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'A slight change in the performance programme timings do not make much difference to the delivery of the course this year. I do not believe changes to practical are necessary however, I do feel the removal of the composition assignment this year or internal assessment of this which would accommodate workload and the barrier of social distancing that will make learning and teaching difficult in this portion of the course.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Where there was disagreement with the proposed approach, it was where respondents felt the modifications did not go far enough. Some respondents made suggestions for alternative modifications, in order to increase opportunities for learning and teaching.

'I believe the composition element of the course should be removed completely for this year'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'2 minutes of a reduction is not much. Consideration should be taken to the composing external assessment. Pupils do not have access to appropriate resources outside of school to complete this work if we are forced into another remote learning environment. Pupils cannot be supported adequately.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the performance components:

Performance — instrument 1 and instrument 2

Minimum programme duration across both instruments, or one instrument and voice: 6 minutes. Maximum programme duration across both instruments, or one instrument and voice: 6 minutes and 30 seconds. Minimum performance time on one instrument or voice: 1 minute and 30 seconds. Minimum number of drum kit styles: three styles.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

Although the assignment is not part of course assessment for 2020–21, centres should consider candidates' progression in composition in future sessions. The assessment of composing skills is not mandatory for 2020–21, however centres could consider continuing with learning and teaching composing activities.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the performance components:

Minimum programme duration across both instruments, or one instrument and voice: 10 minutes. Maximum programme duration across both instruments, or one instrument and voice: 11 minutes. Minimum performance time on one instrument or voice: 3 minutes. Minimum number of drum kit styles: four styles.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the performance components:

Minimum programme duration across both instruments, or one instrument and voice: 15 minutes. Maximum programme duration across both instruments, or one instrument and voice: 17 minutes. Minimum performance time on one instrument or voice: 5 minutes. Minimum number of drum kit styles: five styles.

Advanced Higher bagpipe players must perform a piobaireachd including the crunluath and a minimum of two other styles chosen from a march, Strathspey and reel. Candidates may miss out repeats in the march, Strathspey and reel to accommodate their chosen time allocation on the instrument.

Modification of the assignment

The assignment is removed for session 2020–21 to allow centres to focus their available learning and teaching time with candidates on the question paper and shorter performing components.

Although the assignment is not part of course assessment for 2020–21, centres should consider candidates' progression in composition in future sessions. The assessment of composing skills is not mandatory for 2020–21, however centres could consider continuing with learning and teaching composing activities.

5.34 Music: Technology

A total of 363 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Music: Technology, contributing 2.39% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to modify the requirement for the assignment at National 5 and Higher. At Advanced Higher it was proposed that modifications were made to the course assessment.

There was a mixed response to the proposed modifications for Music: Technology from the respondents as can be seen in the bar charts below.

208. National 5 Music Technology				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Music Technology in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		18.41%	37
2	Agree		30.35%	61
3	Neutral		21.89%	44
4	Disagree		18.41%	37
5	Strongly Disagree		10.95%	22
			answered	201

210. Higher Music Technology				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Music Technology in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		21.16%	40
2	Agree		24.34%	46
3	Neutral		23.81%	45
4	Disagree		21.16%	40
5	Strongly Disagree		9.52%	18
			answered	189

212. Advanced Higher Music Technology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Music Technology in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		17.01%	25
2	Agree		20.41%	30
3	Neutral		43.54%	64
4	Disagree		13.61%	20
5	Strongly Disagree		5.44%	8
			answered	147

YOU SAID...

There was a mixed response, from the respondents to the proposed modifications to Music: Technology.

'It's the most common sense approach. Schools will not be able to fund bespoke equipment for each pupil to meet the requirements of this course so an approach that reflects what the old midi sequencing unit requirements seems sensible.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

The high level of neutral responses often represented a respondent who required greater clarification or support on the detail of the proposals in order to comment on the proposed modifications.

'The proposal offers no details or indication of proposed assignment - it makes sense to offer audio stems for a multi-track recording. I agree with this. But pupils need to do 2 assignments. What do you propose for the other assignment assuming the first one is a multi-track one?'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'No audio capture seems like a useful modification, however not knowing what the project choices will be, the media files that will be used by candidates, compatibility of media files with software, how the assessment will work for this adapted project is making the teaching of the course unclear for both teachers and pupils. What are the expectations and requirements of this new proposal? What guidance will be given to centres to prepare them for this change?'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'When will SQA provide candidates with media files to manipulate, process and mix in their assignment for session 2020–21. Surely centres would need to know very soon what these media files consist of - how can candidates plan their work, not knowing if these media files are to be included in their assignments - or is this to be an additional task?'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

A number of respondent highlighted challenges around delivering and assessing this course due to the limited access candidates are likely to have to specialised equipment.

'Have great concerns over the practicalities of recording and using all the equipment that goes with it.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Removing the audio capture element is the most obvious and right way to respond to the current situation if pupils are being asked to limit use of equipment (especially talking into microphones).'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Removal of the assessment of audio capture in the assignment:

In line with consultation feedback, audio capture will not be assessed in the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music Technology assignments and project in session 2020–21 for the following reasons:

- ◆ to reduce the volume of assessment to allow centres to focus their available learning and teaching time with candidates on the remaining elements of the assignments or project and the question papers (National 5 and Higher)
- ◆ the current concerns in centres about sharing and cleaning equipment, such as microphones.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher and Advanced Higher:

Removal of the assessment of audio capture in the assignment:

In line with consultation feedback, audio capture will not be assessed in the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music Technology assignments and project in session 2020–21 for the following reasons:

- ◆ to reduce the volume of assessment to allow centres to focus their available learning and teaching time with candidates on the remaining elements of the assignments or project and the question papers (National 5 and Higher)
- ◆ the current concerns in centres about sharing and cleaning equipment, such as microphones.

5.35 Music: Portfolio

A total of 118 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Music: Portfolio, contributing 0.78% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to modify the requirements for both the portfolio and performance components and additionally to produce guidance for centres on the assignment.

Whilst a receiving a relatively small response rate, the proposed modification for Music: Portfolio was supported by the respondents, as can be seen in the bar chart below.

215. Advanced Higher Music: Portfolio				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Music: Portfolio in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		25.00%	11
2	Agree		36.36%	16
3	Neutral		25.00%	11
4	Disagree		4.55%	2
5	Strongly Disagree		9.09%	4
			answered	44

YOU SAID...

The majority of respondents were supportive of the proposed modifications to Music: Portfolio. Where there was disagreement, the issue of social distancing rules were highlighted as a potential issue.

'The slight reduction in time required is appreciated.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'Shortening the exam does not make a difference if you are still having to learn all the coursework. Instead coursework should be modified as students will have less time to study, revise and be taught the work that you want us all to complete. This will give a disadvantage as students will be having to work harder to get the same results as previous years which can affect their future while still having to work around this global situation.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'The current covid restrictions would make this difficult as the sharing/passing of paper/books etc is not currently possible. This assumes then that all pupils have access to technology that allows them to compose and share work with their teachers, which is

not always the case. This will limit the degree of feedback that can be provided to pupils from their teachers.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

Modification of the performance components:

Minimum programme duration on one instrument and voice: 5 minutes. Maximum programme duration: 7 minutes. Minimum number of drum kit styles: five styles.

Advanced Higher bagpipe players must perform a piobaireachd including the crunluath and a minimum of two other styles chosen from a march, Strathspey and reel. Candidates may miss out repeats in the march, Strathspey and reel to accommodate their chosen time allocation on the instrument.

Modification of the portfolio:

Minimum portfolio duration: 5 minutes. Maximum portfolio duration: 7 minutes.

Modification of the assignment:

The assignment is removed for session 2020–21 to allow centres to focus their available learning and teaching time with candidates on the question paper and shorter performing components.

Although the assignment is not part of course assessment for 2020–21, centres should consider candidates' progression in composition in future sessions. The assessment of composing skills is not mandatory for 2020–21, however centres could consider continuing with learning and teaching composing activities.

5.36 Philosophy

A total of 122 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Philosophy, contributing 0.80% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to modify the question paper at National 5 and Higher, introducing more optionality.

The original proposed modification for Philosophy was broadly supported by the respondents, as can be seen in the bar charts below.

218. National 5 Philosophy				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Philosophy in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		23.73%	14
2	Agree		45.76%	27
3	Neutral		16.95%	10

218. National 5 Philosophy

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Philosophy in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
4	Disagree		6.78%	4
5	Strongly Disagree		6.78%	4
			answered	59

220. Higher Philosophy

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Philosophy in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		31.82%	21
2	Agree		48.48%	32
3	Neutral		7.58%	5
4	Disagree		7.58%	5
5	Strongly Disagree		4.55%	3
			answered	66

YOU SAID...

There was a relatively small response rate to this subject however, the quantitative responses indicate that the majority of respondents were supportive of the proposed modifications to Philosophy. Qualitative comments were also broadly supportive.

'I like the idea of having the choice between philosophers in the exam paper. This allows teachers to choose and focus on one if there are significant time-constraints.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I agree the choice of Descartes OR Hume in both papers is a good move.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'This will make coverage of the course less stressful.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Where there was disagreement, respondents felt that considerations should be given to removing the assignment from National 5, in line with Higher. They cited concerns over disadvantaging candidates and issues of practicality as justification for this approach, as shown below.

'I still feel there needs to be a change implemented for the assignment. The assignment as it currently stands assesses the memory and recall skills of students rather than the skills they have developed through researching and writing their AVU's. The assignment is unfairly biased towards pupils who have strong memory skills. A pupil could work very hard on their assignment and demonstrate excellent key skills assessed in Philosophy; but if they have a weaker 'recall', then they will end up with a significantly lower grade than their original research/essay would have achieved. It is my recommendation that the SQA seriously reconsider how the assignment is approached in Nat 5 Philosophy. The possibility of pupils creating a piece of work more in line with how Nat 5 English essays are recorded. Allow our pupils to demonstrate their skills without having to memorise an essay which DOES disadvantage certain pupils.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I believe that it would be more practical to not have the assignment worth 20% and make the whole assessment exam based.'

(Practitioner, Independent state school, National 5)

'Although the removal of one philosopher would aid pupils within the exam I feel that the comment made about the assignment are not in line with the reality of the subject. Saying that the coursework 'lends itself to a blended learning approach,' is not always the case. Some pupils have little to no access to the internet at home. Many already struggle with the assignment component and organising timed write ups for this coursework in the necessary could be an issue if there are any school closures.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I believe only having a choice of one philosopher to answer questions on will make staff feel more comfortable about getting through the necessary work for assessment and will take the pressure off both staff and students considering what has transpired this year and in light of the fact there may be a second wave of COVID and this could disrupt teaching and learning even more. The modification indicated is a very valid approach to course assessment and should be welcomed by all Philosophy teachers.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper:

Optional questions will be introduced to allow candidates to answer on either Descartes or Hume for one year only.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

Optional questions will be introduced to allow candidates to answer on either Descartes or Hume.

5.37 Photography

A total of 310 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Photography, contributing 2.04% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to modify the project by reducing the total number of images required.

The original proposed modification for Photography was broadly supported by the respondents, as can be seen in the bar charts below.

223. Higher Photography				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Photography in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		18.63%	30
2	Agree		32.92%	53
3	Neutral		19.88%	32
4	Disagree		19.25%	31
5	Strongly Disagree		9.32%	15
			answered	161

YOU SAID...

There were very few qualitative responses to Photography. Quantitative responses indicate that there was broad agreement with the proposals and qualitative comments support this. In some instances, where there was disagreement, respondents suggested that further modification could be made to better support teaching and learning opportunities.

‘There is little appreciable difference between the effort required to do 12 photo shoots and 10. If the course is to be made less time consuming then more like 8 photo shoots would be easier - otherwise just keep it 12 and have more understanding about subject matter and intelligence of approach when adapting to current restrictions.’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

‘Consideration should be given to reducing further to 8 final images’

(Parent / Carer Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

Final Modification

We will reduce the number of final images required in the project from 12 to 8 and provide the following guidance to assist centres:

Equipment

You should remind candidates that they can:

- ◆ use mobile phone and/or tablet cameras for the Higher Photography project.
- ◆ download camera and editing apps to give them more control than pre-installed camera apps. They can check phone or app settings to ensure that images are captured and stored at an acceptable resolution for printing.

Topic

Some topics take more time than others. For example, topics based on landscape photography frequently require fewer shoots, so can be less time-consuming than others, such as still life.

Investigative research

There is no requirement for candidates to provide notes or comments on their research images. If there is a clear relevance to the candidate’s chosen topic then the images on their own can access the full range of marks.

Body of work

Candidates do not need to take a large number of images for each shoot or idea. Instead, they could take fewer, more focused images that demonstrate a range of techniques, compositions, or ideas.

5.38 Physical Education

A total of 1,192 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Physical Education, contributing 7.83% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposed modifications for Physical Education at National 5 to Advanced Higher comprised of guidance for centres on the performance element and portfolio element.

The feedback indicated that there was more support for this approach than not, though at the higher SCQF levels the support lessened.

226. National 5 Physical Education

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Physical Education in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		16.17%	86
2	Agree		28.20%	150
3	Neutral		22.74%	121
4	Disagree		18.05%	96
5	Strongly Disagree		14.85%	79
			answered	532

228. Higher Physical Education

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Physical Education in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		13.03%	58
2	Agree		26.74%	119
3	Neutral		24.04%	107
4	Disagree		18.20%	81
5	Strongly Disagree		17.98%	80
			answered	445

230. Advanced Higher Physical Education

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Physical Education in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		12.21%	37
2	Agree		19.80%	60
3	Neutral		48.51%	147
4	Disagree		9.24%	28

230. Advanced Higher Physical Education

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Physical Education in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
5	Strongly Disagree		10.23%	31
			answered	303

YOU SAID...

The qualitative feedback indicated that respondents felt the proposed modifications did not go far enough and would not provide increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'One off performances are the main stumbling block. These could possible be reduced to one, instead of two. Could marks also be based off previous performances and professional judgement of the teacher? If we go back into lockdown and blended learning in imposed then perhaps the number of factors covered could be reduced.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I agree with the changes that have been made to the theory side of the course however more must be done to ensure changed to the practical side. For example taking he assessment down from 2 activities to 1 activity as we are currently unable to do many activities and will be missing out for some time.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Reduce to assessing only through one activity.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Any changes / reductions to course work near to be clear and concise and given to schools sooner rather than later.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

Respondents also highlighted the challenges faced by candidates who are undertaking the performance element of the course due social distancing requirements.

'Practical performance should be restricted to 1 activity this year to make it easier to comply with social distancing procedures. Also due to the number sports being available being reduced.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'There must be changes to the practical assessment: limit to assessing through only one activity. This will give pupils the ability to focus on one activity when measures ease and pupils are allowed to participate fully in team game activities.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'If activities such as team games with contact are not accessible for pupils, clear guidance on the performance assessment must be given.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Guidance for the performance: course assessment task

The course assessment task will be modified to assess candidates' ability to effectively perform in one physical activity instead of two.

Guidance for the performance: assessment item:

The extent to which rules and regulations are followed and etiquette is displayed (including working with others).

'Working with others' can be assessed by observing the level of co-operation demonstrated through interactions with an opponent or partner while observing physical distancing.

Appropriate etiquette will be observable through adherence to rules or demonstration of suitable behaviour pre, during or post performance.

Modification of guidance for the portfolio:

(2a) Explain the challenges you may face when gathering reliable data on your two selected factors. AND (2e) From the data you have gathered, describe your strengths and development needs in relation to your performance for both factors.

Collecting information on 'whole performances' in team/group activities may require candidates to reflect on a previous performance and make use of coach/teacher feedback to identify and corroborate agreed strengths and areas for development. The involvement of the teacher/coach would provide increased validity and reliability of the information collected.

(3e) Evaluate your performance in the two selected factors.

Personal reflections about the effectiveness of the personal performance plan (PDP) process would enable candidates to make evaluative statements about the potential impact of improvements on whole performance and the targets set.

Alternatively, centres can advise candidates to complete PDP processes using activities where whole performance information will be available before and after completion of the PDP.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Guidance for performance course assessment task:

The course assessment task will be modified to assess candidates' ability to effectively perform in one physical activity instead of two.

Guidance for performance assessment item:

Extent to which rules and regulations are followed and etiquette is displayed (including working with others).

'Working with others' can be assessed by observing the level of co-operation demonstrated through interactions with an opponent or partner while observing physical distancing. Appropriate etiquette will be observable through adherence to rules or demonstration of suitable behaviour pre, during or post performance.

Guidance for Higher question paper

Area of mandatory content: Key planning information — Interpretation of qualitative and quantitative information to allow identification of strengths and prioritise areas for development.

Personal reflections about the effectiveness of the PDP process can be supported by test results/focused data collection.

Qualitative information can be the basis for strengths and weaknesses being identified and prioritised. The use of a coach/teacher to corroborate judgements would provide further validity/reliability.

Area of mandatory content: Recording, monitoring and evaluating performance development. Evaluation of the performance development process— making informed decisions based on evidence recorded from the monitoring process to judge the effectiveness of the performance development process.

Personal reflections about the effectiveness of the PDP process can be supported by test results/focused data collection. This would enable candidates to make evaluative statements about the potential impact of improvements on whole performance and targets set.

At Advanced Higher:

Guidance for centres on performance:

Assessment item: Extent to which rules and regulations are followed and etiquette is displayed (including working with others).

'Working with others' can be assessed by observing the level of co-operation demonstrated through interactions with an opponent or partner while observing physical distancing. Appropriate etiquette will be observable through adherence to rules or demonstration of suitable behaviour pre, during or post performance.

Guidance for centres on the project:

Stage 1 of the project: Collecting information to analyse factor(s) impacting on performance. Qualitative information from personal reflections can be used as a source for candidates to consider how the different factors can influence effective performance. Relevant results from recognised tests and analytical tools will also provide evidence of the impact of these factors upon a performance. Information from these could be qualitative and/or quantitative.

Stage 4 of the project: Analysing progress and evaluating the performance development process, including considering future development needs.

Personal reflections about the effectiveness of the PDP process can be supported by test results/focused data collection. This would enable candidates to make evaluative statements about the potential impact of improvements on whole performance and targets set.

5.39 Physics

A total of 2,183 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Physics, contributing 14.35% of the total responses to the consultation. The original modification was to return the Physics question paper duration and structure to pre-2018 format for both National 5 and Higher. There was no modification proposed at Advanced Higher.

There was a strong level of disagreement for this approach as illustrated in the bar charts below.

233. National 5 Physics				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Physics in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		9.07%	95
2	Agree		17.29%	181
3	Neutral		13.28%	139
4	Disagree		16.91%	177
5	Strongly Disagree		43.46%	455
			answered	1,047

235. Higher Physics				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Physics in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		10.22%	104
2	Agree		14.54%	148
3	Neutral		11.79%	120
4	Disagree		16.90%	172
5	Strongly Disagree		46.56%	474
			answered	1018

237. Advanced Higher Physics

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Physics in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.65%	72
2	Agree		12.50%	104
3	Neutral		26.20%	218
4	Disagree		12.38%	103
5	Strongly Disagree		40.26%	335
			answered	832

YOU SAID...

The feedback, across a range of different respondents, indicated that there was not a lot of support for changing the question paper as they stated that this would not reduce teaching time and the same amount of content would need to be covered.

'Returning to the pre-2018 duration and mark allocations does not reduce the amount of teaching required to complete the Nat 5 Physics course.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Reducing the length of the exam to 2 hours whilst leaving the full content of the course to be taught, learned and revised will not be of any help to the candidates.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'It is not fair to make children learn the same amount of content and answer the same amount of questions but have less time to complete the exam. This will most definitely have a negative result.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Many respondents highlighted the removal of the assignment as an option to reduce workload for practitioners and learners. They also highlighted the difficulties in completing the assignment with the current Covid-19 social distancing rules in place. They highlighted the need to clean equipment between learners using it and the difficulties this will bring. Further they highlighted that practitioners would be unable to support learners, as in previous years, during their assignment due to the rules. This view was shared across a range of respondents as illustrated in the comments below.

'We will find it very difficult to organise and facilitate experiments for the N5 Assignment. In Physics pupils often need help with changing ammeter settings etc and this will be challenging whilst following social distancing. This is before

considering the impracticalities of having kit for each separate pupil or having to clean kit after each and every use.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'For many schools it won't be possible to undergo the assignments and the practical work due to the current COVID-19 measures. Also schools that would have used unis to undergo practical work will be unable to do so. It would be much fairer if qualifications were solely based on the examination, as many people just won't be able to do the assignment. There should also be limited questions based on practical work as many people are unable to do this also.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Reducing the exam will not affect the volume of learning. This year, especially with a lot of uncertainties, it is unfair to load students with more work knowing that there is a possibility of them missing time in school due to the government self isolation guidelines. Students have also already missed time in class and are having to work harder. There is a high chance that they won't be able to complete the assignment due to the lack of access of equipment and materials. Removing the assignment is the best option.'

(Parent / carer, National 5)

'I would request that the Assignment is removed as an assessment requirement. Practical work within a socially distanced setting is extremely difficult. The constrained requirements of the assignment require significant teaching and pupil preparation and write up time whilst having a large impact on pupils stress levels.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Considering the lack of practical work under the COVID-19 routine for use of apparatus, it is putting extreme pressure and stress on pupils and teachers, to complete an assignment in which one of the resources is practical work to produce and interpret data as one of the two resources. The project should be abandoned this academic year.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper:

The format and the length of the question will **not** be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

The format and the length of the question will **not** be modified, as there was not strong support for the proposed modification.

Additionally, maintaining the current format and balance of the paper, without adding additional skills-based questions will mean that candidates can be familiar with the style and format of the paper through practising past papers and the specimen paper.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification of the project:

The coursework component (project) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

There was widespread recognition of the status and worth of the project at Advanced Higher. The overwhelming rationale put forward for this move was the difficulty in carrying out practical work safely, following the guidelines issued by SSERC. Some also highlighted that they often rely on university facilities for equipment that they don't have in school, and universities have indicated that they will not be able to offer such facilities this year, resulting in additional problems within schools around practical work and apparatus.

Respondents were very clear that this move should be for this year only.

5.40 Politics

A total of 192 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Politics, contributing 1.26% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal for Politics was for no modifications to the course.

The quantitative feedback indicated a mixed response to this approach, as is illustrated by the bar chart below.

240. Higher Politics

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Politics in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		15.00%	15
2	Agree		21.00%	21
3	Neutral		16.00%	16
4	Disagree		20.00%	20
5	Strongly Disagree		28.00%	28
			answered	100

YOU SAID...

There was a small number of qualitative responses to the feedback with a mixed response to the proposals. In some cases, the respondents offered an alternative approach to assessment.

‘Due to uncertainty, Higher Politics assignment should be removed for one year only to allow candidates and teachers to focus on QP knowledge and skills.’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

‘It would be reasonable to consider a greater choice of question in the sections of Paper 1 thus alleviating some of the pressure on both learners and their teachers.’

(Practitioner Local authority secondary school, Higher)

*‘The Higher Politics exam should be modified in order to be able to finish the learning within the allocated time including possible school disruptions for the pandemic.
2. This could be done by giving a wider range of options in the extended response questions.’*

(Practitioner Local authority secondary school, Higher)

‘My school has already been affected but positive COVID-19 cases and it is almost inevitable at one point there will be a period of self isolation for myself and my school. This limits time for teaching and learning, surely there can be some flexibility in delivery to just allow room for this without decreasing the validity of taking the subject.’

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Some respondents highlighted the differences between the proposed modifications for Politics and those in similar subjects.

‘I would expect that H Politics is adjusted in the same way as H Mods and History, adding further optionality so candidates have three optional questions in each section of Paper 1 instead of two.’

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'I am worried that we will not have time to finish the course, therefore I think that more questions should be offered in the exam, like what is happening with modern studies.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the following modifications have been introduced and will be implemented as follows:

Modification of question paper 1 component:

Section 3 will contain the 12-mark extended response questions. In this section there will now be a choice of three questions, one from each content area.

Sections 1 and 2 will contain the 20-mark extended response questions and both will continue to have two questions sampled from the three content areas.

In line with consultation feedback, this modification is intended to help ease the pressure on learning and teaching by providing the option for candidates to be taught a narrower range of topics in Section 3 while still enabling them to be sufficiently prepared for the question paper.

Modification of the assignment:

The coursework component (assignment) will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

Removing the assignment means less class time will be required for planning, organising, and developing the assignment. This will reduce pressure and allow for increased learning and teaching time for the course.

5.41 Practical Cake Craft

A total of 241 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Practical Cake Craft, contributing 1.58% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to modify the requirement for the assignment in Practical Cake Craft.

The feedback on the original proposal for Practical Cake Craft indicated a level of disagreement with the approach, as is illustrated by the bar chart below.

243. National 5 Practical Cake Craft				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Practical Cake Craft in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		12.75%	19
2	Agree		20.13%	30
3	Neutral		13.42%	20

243. National 5 Practical Cake Craft

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Practical Cake Craft in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
4	Disagree		27.52%	41
5	Strongly Disagree		26.17%	39
			answered	149

YOU SAID...

The qualitative feedback indicated that the modifications do not go far enough to offset the loss of learning and teaching time due to national lockdown.

'The change in assessment needs to account for the lack of practical time these pupils will have had compared to previous years.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'The removal of one evaluative section does nothing to remove assessment burden as the candidates still have to be taught and master this skill.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'While I can see the benefits of reducing the length of the paper not entirely sure removal of this element is useful as it helps with student organisation for their final cake e.g resources checklist & will improve performance on the day as items required recorded. Can't see this would be beneficial but would help with time element on overall paper. Reduction in Evaluation points may be more useful especially for pupils who are not as strong in written areas and may struggle with little support.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Some respondents highlighted the challenges faced in delivering practical assignments with social distancing rules in place and indicated that a change to the practical element of the assessment would be welcomed.

'I feel that changes to the Practical Activity need to be implemented. Cooking has not yet resumed in schools do to the amount of sanitising that would need to happen in class time.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of Component 2 Section 2 (evaluation).

Component 3: Candidates to provide a portfolio of evidence for skills which would have been assessed in the practical activity, to support a centre-generated mark.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

5.42 Practical Cookery

A total of 586 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Practical Cookery, contributing 3.85% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to modify the assignment in Practical Cookery.

The quantitative responses to the original proposal for Practical Cookery indicated high levels of disagreement with the approach, as is illustrated by the bar chart below.

246. National 5 Practical Cookery				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Practical Cookery in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		6.81%	25
2	Agree		10.63%	39
3	Neutral		8.72%	32
4	Disagree		27.52%	101
5	Strongly Disagree		46.32%	170
			answered	367

YOU SAID...

The qualitative feedback indicated that there was a high level of disagreement with the proposals for Practical Cookery. Respondents felt that the proposed modifications did not go far enough, to offset the loss of learning and teaching time.

'Students in a practical subject like this have missed time to develop skills- these skills are practice based and cumulative and therefore it is difficult to make up the time lost. Greater learning and teaching opportunities might support this. If schools are unable to deliver practical work soon however it will be unrealistic to expect students to perform under the same conditions as previously. A continuous assessment approach of skills could be more applicable and a better way to assess practical skills in any case.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Some respondents made suggestions as to how the course assessment could be modified to support increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'Removing the time-plan and giving the pupils a standardised one from the SQA should also be considered as a very strong course of action.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Perhaps it would be better for a number of techniques and processes to be completed over the year in class. Giving them a time plan is a good idea.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'The removal of equipment list and service details from the national 5 qualification does not address the current problem of pupils not being able to begin practical work. This will subsequently have an impact on pupils abilities to reach the required standard for the practical activity element of the exam. I don't see that the removal of teaching service details or equipment lists will free up a substantial amount of time to catch up on the building of missed practical skills.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'The proposed changes will make no impact. At present and for the foreseeable future we cannot cook with candidates therefore reducing the number of dishes required at assessment would be of benefit.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Many respondents also highlighted concerns around the challenges of delivering the practical assignments whilst social distancing rules are in place.

'I have concerns that pupils will not be adequately prepared for the practical assessment. Providing a time plan to pupils would help as well as extending the time allowed to prepare the three dishes.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

Modification of the assignment:

SQA will not issue a specific course assessment task for session 2020–21.

Component 2 and 3 — As practical work in many centres is currently not allowed or severely restricted, centres will provide marks for these components based on the work candidates are able to complete.

Component 2 — Centres will select an appropriate practical activity for candidates to base this assignment on.

Component 3 — Centres will base marks for this component on recipes currently provided for the Cookery Skills Techniques and Processes National 5 unit assessment, as these recipes cover an appropriate range of skills and techniques for this level. This can be completed at any stage in the session, enabling centres to work around restrictions to practical work. SQA will provide marking instructions for these recipes.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

5.43 Practical Electronics

A total of 78 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Practical Electronics, contributing 0.51% of the total responses to the consultation. Originally, no modifications were proposed for Practical Electronics.

The quantitative feedback indicated disagreement with this approach, as is illustrated by the bar chart below.

249. National 5 Practical Electronics				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Practical Electronics in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		20.59%	7
2	Agree		11.76%	4
3	Neutral		11.76%	4
4	Disagree		11.76%	4
5	Strongly Disagree		44.12%	15
			answered	34

YOU SAID...

There was only a small number of comments due to the low number of responses for the subject. The qualitative feedback indicated that there was a high level of disagreement to the proposals for Practical Electronics. Some respondents made suggestions as to how the course assessment could be modified to support increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'...return to a pre-2018 format of delivering the National 5 courses. This would mean having no final exam and return to teacher 'observations' throughout the year for these marks. This would gain 30% more time that is set aside during the school year preparing

for prelims and final exams to catch up time missed due to the pandemic with the practical abilities.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Respondents also highlighted the challenges of delivering the course due to current social distancing requirements.

'Practical activity has been highly restricted (at the moment we aren't allowed to do any and have no access to laptops for simulation work). This obviously makes the course tricky to teach and has increased time pressures significantly.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

Modification of the question paper:

The question paper will be removed for session 2020–21 only. The course assessment is based only on the Practical Activity.

While consultation feedback does reflect strong concerns around teachers' ability to deliver the practical aspects of the course, the practical activity represents 70% of the course assessment and is fundamental to the validity of the course. Respondents indicated that the only plausible approach was to remove the question paper.

While the theory content has not been removed from the course, but only from the assessment, this should give centres greater opportunity and flexibility to concentrate on the practical aspects of the course and allow candidates to meet the requirements of the practical activity, while following guidance around social distancing and use of equipment.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

5.44 Practical Metalworking

A total of 280 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Practical Metalworking, contributing 1.84% of the total responses to the consultation. Originally, no modifications were proposed for Practical Metalworking.

The feedback indicated a high level of disagreement with this approach, as is illustrated by the bar chart below.

252. National 5 Practical Metalworking

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Practical Metalworking in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		6.04%	9
2	Agree		10.07%	15
3	Neutral		8.05%	12
4	Disagree		15.44%	23
5	Strongly Disagree		60.40%	90
			answered	149

YOU SAID...

The feedback indicated that there was a high level of disagreement with the proposals for Practical Metalworking. The respondents felt that more could be done to support learners and practitioners by providing increased opportunities for learning and teaching.

'The need to allow as much workshop time as possible is significantly more important than theory work. A move away from the exam would be more worthwhile.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Practical assignments should be released ASAP'.

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Some respondents offered alternative modifications to course assessment, including removing the exam entirely and modifying the timings for the course assessment.

'Remove exam and bring forward the course project.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Remove exam to reduce pressure on theory periods. Earlier release of final project to allow more time for individual machine use'.

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposals were amended and will be implemented, as follows:

Modification of the question paper:

The question paper will be removed for session 2020–21 only. The course assessment is based only on the Practical Activity.

Modification to the practical activity:

The 2020 practical activity will be reissued for session 2021 and it will be published as soon as administrative amends are made to it, rather than at the end of October.

The question paper is 30% of course assessment – consultation feedback indicated that removing this element will allow practitioners to focus on practical skills with candidates. However, there is the expectation that theory will still be delivered, and candidates’ understanding of this will be evidenced through the practical activity. While removing the question paper does not necessarily allow for more learning and teaching time, it does ease assessment burden on candidates. This change means that the weighting of the course assessment will change to 100% Practical Activity.

Practitioners are familiar with the 2020 Practical Activity and the material requirements, so reissuing it will reduce preparation and planning time for centres. Publishing the assessment early will mean that candidates can complete it at any time during the year once their teacher is satisfied that they have the skills to do so.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

5.45 Practical Woodworking

A total of 582 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Practical Woodworking, contributing 3.83% of the total responses to the consultation.

Originally, no modifications were proposed for Practical Woodworking. The feedback indicated a high level of disagreement to this approach, as is illustrated by the bar chart below.

255. National 5 Practical Woodworking				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Practical Woodworking in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.66%	29
2	Agree		12.84%	43
3	Neutral		10.75%	36
4	Disagree		15.52%	52
5	Strongly Disagree		52.24%	175
			answered	335

YOU SAID...

The feedback from the respondents highlighted that the proposed approach for Practical Woodworking did not meet the needs of the practitioner or the learner. There were many

comments about the impact of social distancing rules on the practicalities of delivering and undertaking the assignment.

'Wood turning needs to be removed from the practical assessment. Social distancing cannot happen when learning and teaching on this equipment, health and safety is a priority.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'SQA still need to be mindful of limitations to workshop practice within authorities at the moment. Pupils not accessing workshops or tools due to not being allowed to share resources and tools.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Some aspects of the course could assessed through the question paper alone this year. Processes such as turning require a lot of one to one, close support, especially when pupils are first using these machines. Social distancing measures will prevent many from being able to teach this skill appropriately or safely. Consideration must be made for alternative assessment if pupils are unable to learn/practice the required skills throughout the year.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Respondents made suggestions for alternative approaches for consideration as the comments below highlight.

'Remove the exam.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'In my opinion, for this year alone, the young person should be graded on their internal assignment with the logbook and the question paper should be paused for this exam diet - this reducing the stress levels for the young person.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'A way of addressing this would be to go back to Pre-2018 of delivering the course and remove the 30% exam at the end of the course and assessment of knowledge is carried out by the teacher during the year. This would mean that the current 30% of teaching time dedicated to preparing for an exam could be re-allocated to the practical elements of the course and allow the full delivery of course elements.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'The course assignment submission date should be moved to later in the year and choice of construction methods given.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Remove exam. Would allow more time for practical, lessens need of classroom time. Earlier release of projects to allow more time.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the original proposal was amended and will be implemented, as follows:

Modification of the question paper:

The question paper will be removed for session 2020–21 only.

Modification of the practical activity:

The 2020 practical activity will be reissued for session 2021 and it will be published as soon as administrative amends are made to it. Mark submission dates will be extended (as late as possible/practicable).

Consultation feedback indicated that removing the question paper component will support more time for learning and teaching. We will also reuse the session 2019–20 practical activity (i.e. coursework) and republish this at the earliest opportunity to direct learning and teaching. The submission date for marks will be extended as late as possible/ practicable to allow as much time as possible for course delivery, the undertaking of the practical activity (coursework), and the internal assessment of the practical activity (coursework).

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

5.46 Psychology

A total of 383 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Psychology, contributing 2.52% of the total responses to the consultation. Originally no modifications were proposed for either National 5 or Higher Psychology.

The feedback on the proposed modifications indicated a high level of disagreement with the approach across the two levels, as is illustrated by the bar charts below.

258. National 5 Psychology				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Psychology in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.38%	14
2	Agree		7.78%	13
3	Neutral		29.94%	50

258. National 5 Psychology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Psychology in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
4	Disagree		17.37%	29
5	Strongly Disagree		36.53%	61
			answered	167

260. Higher Psychology

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Psychology in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		9.33%	21
2	Agree		7.56%	17
3	Neutral		12.89%	29
4	Disagree		13.78%	31
5	Strongly Disagree		56.44%	127
			answered	225

YOU SAID...

The feedback from respondents indicated disagreement with the proposed approach to Psychology. Qualitative feedback indicated that the modifications would need to go further to allow delivery of the course at both levels.

'The content of the Higher Psychology is very large and difficult to cover adequately in normal circumstances. It will be extremely challenging to cover the full course under the current teaching constraints. I believe the optional content from each of the topic areas should be removed for one year.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'My school has already been affected directly by positive COVID-19 cases. My school could potentially face closures which limits time for teaching and learning, surely there are some flexibility in delivery to allow room for this without decreasing the validity of taking the subject.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'National 5 Psychology involves too many topics and there is significantly more content to learn than in other subjects. Should we move to blended learning, ensuring that learners fully understand the complexities of the subject will be exceptionally challenging. There would be ways of streamlining this course without compromising it or making it too easy for the learners.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Respondents made some suggestions for alternative modifications to the course assessment to provide opportunities for more learning and teaching time. These suggestions included introducing optionality, reduction in content and bringing Psychology in line with other subjects within similar sectors.

'I propose they should have the choice of answering on one topic from each of the two units, social and individual behaviour or to take out the assignment (we are unable to use computer suites at the moment!).'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Some flexibility needed for assessment in case most teaching is online and/or a second peak occurs.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'N5 Psychology should be reduced in line with other N5 subjects.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Only answer fewer topics'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Specific research briefs would be beneficial for individual topics'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'Adjustments should be made- particularly regarding the Higher Assignment as this is such a large component of the course and there are implications of how pupils could carry out experiments in the first place due to new health and safety regulations. If adjustments are to be made for Higher subjects this must be consistent across all subjects.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us the original proposal was amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper:

The question paper will now have two sections only, based on the mandatory content:

Section 1: Individual Behaviour – Sleep and Dreams (25 marks)

Section 2: Social Behaviour – Conformity (25 marks)

All questions will be answered by candidates. There will be no optional questions. The total mark allocation in the question paper will reduce from 70 marks to 50 marks and the duration of the exam will reduce from 2 hours to 1 hour 30 minutes.

Modification of the assignment:

For session 2020–21 assessment conditions will be eased to allow teachers to suggest the research topic to candidates.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

The question paper will now have two sections only:

Section 1: Individual Behaviour — Sleep and Dreams (30 marks)

Section 2: Social Behaviour — Conformity and Obedience (30 marks)

All questions will be answered by candidates — there will be no optional questions. The total mark allocation in the question paper will reduce from 80 marks to 60 marks and the duration of the exam will reduce from 2 hours 40 minutes to 2 hours.

5.47 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

A total of 507 respondents provided feedback on the proposed modifications to Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies, contributing 3.33% of the total responses to the consultation. The original proposal was to advise centres of small sub-topics which would not be directly assessed at National 5 or Higher in 2021. No modification was proposed at Advanced Higher.

The feedback on the proposed modifications indicated broad agreement with the approach, as is illustrated by the bar charts below.

263. National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		17.36%	42
2	Agree		39.67%	96
3	Neutral		19.83%	48

263. National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
4	Disagree		14.05%	34
5	Strongly Disagree		9.09%	22
			answered	242

265. Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		14.85%	34
2	Agree		39.74%	91
3	Neutral		17.03%	39
4	Disagree		13.54%	31
5	Strongly Disagree		14.85%	34
			answered	229

267. Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies in 2021?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		12.14%	21
2	Agree		27.17%	47
3	Neutral		45.66%	79
4	Disagree		6.94%	12
5	Strongly Disagree		8.09%	14
			answered	173

YOU SAID...

The feedback from the respondents indicated that there was broad agreement for the proposed modifications, with respondents indicating that they felt the modifications were appropriate given the current situation.

'It is a relief that the narrowing of assessable content is being proposed, especially with current local school closures due to Covid outbreaks. this information is required as soon as possible.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I think it's great that some topics are being removed in the RMPS course because it is quite a big course compared to some of the others. It will really help when it comes round to revision time and will help teachers in the terms of having more time to teach the assessed topics.'

(Candidate, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

However, there was also a feeling that the changes were not significant enough to increase learning and teaching time and some respondents offered alternative approaches to modifying the course assessment.

'Remove the assignment - focus on the exam only - full delivery of the course in terms of SQA concepts'

(Practitioner, Independent state school, National 5)

'I disagree with retaining the assignment element of the course this year. Where there will be a far greater potential for disruption to traditional learning and teaching, and sufficiently supporting pupils doing such a variety of topics will be far more demanding than ever, especially for pupils with SEN and AAA.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

'...would it not make more sense to remove the assignment element as pupils are not going to have the same access to research resources in school at this time. It would not be fair to expect pupils to conduct all their research at home.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

Some practitioners highlighted concerns around equitable access to resources (ICT, books etc.) for their candidates and felt the assignment could be removed to alleviate some of these issues.

'I think the assignment should be dropped. It does not lend itself to blended learning for everyone. Many pupils can't access IT in order to conduct research. This would free up time to focus on course content and skills.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'I am worried about the assignment which we usually start in October. At the moment our school library is closed to pupils meaning they have no access to books or our IT suite for research. I'm not sure that my pupils have their own research tools at home. Can there be an adjustment to the assignment? Either remove it this year or remove the formal write-up part of it?'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

Originally, at Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies, no modifications were proposed. Practitioners particularly felt that there needed to be some modifications to support teachers and learners, and to bring RMPS in line with other social subjects.

'Given that other social subjects are encouraging a wider range of optional questions, I feel this would be an appropriate suggestion for the RMPS exam. Centres will teach the units in different orders therefore there needs to be much more flexibility.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

'Although students are expected to do much of the study themselves they still need taught, help and guidance so again I would request a choice of questions so as to allow teachers to focus on the ones they think the students will do their best at.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us the original proposal was amended and will be implemented, as follows:

At National 5

Modification to question paper:

Centres will be informed of small sub-topic areas of content that will not be directly assessed in 2021.

Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. Teachers and lecturers will be aware of the sub-topic areas and themes that will not feature in the question paper for 2021 and will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery, and any internal assessment of these sub-topics and themes.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21.

Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification to question paper:

Centres will be informed of small sub-topic areas of content that will not be directly assessed in 2021.

Centres will be advised that they should continue to deliver the course as normal. Teachers and lecturers will be aware of the sub-topic areas and themes that will not feature in the question paper for 2021 and will be free to decide timing and depth of delivery, and any internal assessment of these sub-topics and themes.

Modification of the assignment:

Removal of the coursework component (assignment) for session 2020–21 only.

At Advanced Higher:

Modification to the question paper:

Currently candidates choose one from two essay questions in each section of the question paper. For 2021, this will be increased to three so that candidates have the option to answer on all three areas within each section. We will also inform centres of the areas of the course which will be assessed in the source questions.

5.48 Sociology

A total of 92 respondents selected Sociology as a subject for which they wished to respond to the proposed modifications, contributing 0.60% of the total responses to the consultation. However, only a small number of those respondents (25) provided either quantitative or qualitative feedback, so there was a very small response for this subject. Originally, no modifications were proposed for Sociology at either National 5 or Higher.

The feedback indicated a mixed response to this approach, as is illustrated by the bar charts below.

270. National 5 Sociology				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for National 5 Sociology in 2021?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		8.00%	2
2	Agree		20.00%	5
3	Neutral		40.00%	10
4	Disagree		20.00%	5
5	Strongly Disagree		12.00%	3
			answered	25

272. Higher Sociology				
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Higher Sociology in 2021?				

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly Agree		12.00%	3
2	Agree		24.00%	6
3	Neutral		24.00%	6
4	Disagree		12.00%	3
5	Strongly Disagree		28.00%	7
			answered	25

YOU SAID...

There was very little qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject due to the small number of responses. Those who did comment asked for some reduction in the content of the course, to facilitate blended learning and to align with other subjects.

'The reduction in the number of mandatory studies could have proven to be beneficial. The course content is already very tight in normal circumstances and so with a model of blended learning, or to accommodate local lock downs, etc, I would have thought that this could have been considered.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, National 5)

'Most other subjects have some sort of changes proposed to accommodate blended learning etc but there appears to have been a decision made that Sociology would not be impacted in the same way as other subjects and I don't think this is correct.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the following modifications have been introduced and will be implemented as follows:

At National 5:

Modification of the question paper:

The question paper will now be two sections:

Question 1: Human Society (30 marks)

Question 2: Culture and Identity (20 marks)

The total mark allocation for the question paper will reduce from 70 marks to 50 marks and the duration of the exam will reduce from 2 hours to 1 hour and 30 minutes.

The external assessment of National 5 will not be progressing in session 2020-21. Modifications to National 5 course assessments have been included in this report as a point of reference. For further information, please read the introduction of this report.

At Higher:

Modification of the question paper:

The question paper will now be two sections:

Question 1: Human Society (30 marks)

Question 2: Culture and Identity (25 marks)

The total mark allocation for the question paper will reduce from 80 marks to 55 marks and the duration of the exam will reduce from 2 hours 40 minutes to 1 hour and 50 minutes.

5.49 Statistics

A total of 57 respondents selected Statistics as a subject for which they wished to respond to the proposed modifications, contributing 0.37% of the total responses to the consultation. However, only a small number of those respondents (19) provided either quantitative or qualitative feedback, so there was a very small response for this subject.

Originally, no modifications were proposed for Statistics. The feedback indicated that the majority of respondents agreed with this approach, as is illustrated by the bar chart below. However, it is important to note the response rate was low.

275. Advanced Higher Statistics			Response Percent	Response Total
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to course assessment for Advanced Higher Statistics in 2021?				
1	Strongly Agree		26.32%	5
2	Agree		31.58%	6
3	Neutral		26.32%	5
4	Disagree		5.26%	1
5	Strongly Disagree		10.53%	2
			answered	19

YOU SAID...

There was very little qualitative feedback from the respondents for this subject due to the small number of responses. Those who did comment asked for some flexibility in the course, to offset the impact of any local lockdowns.

'Some optionality would allow for some flexibility for candidates where time pressure (perhaps because of future local lockdowns etc), would mean that the teaching of some content is not as thorough as centres would normally wish it to be.'

(Practitioner, Local authority secondary school, Advanced Higher)

WE DID...

Based on what you told us, the following proposal was introduced and will be implemented, as follows:

General feedback received through this consultation asked for changes across all levels of courses to take account of the challenging circumstances of this year. As a result, we have made modifications to all Advanced Higher courses on the grounds of equity.

Modification of the question paper:

Optionality has been introduced into question paper 2. 7 marks out of 83 will be available for each optional section. Questions will be selected to ensure that whichever option a candidate chooses, the balance of the question paper overall will remain at 65% level C and 35% level A.

6 Summary of modifications

We were grateful for the high level of engagement in this consultation which has enabled us to reflect on our proposed modifications and, in many cases, amend these proposals based on your feedback.

The table below provides a summary of the decisions taken based on your feedback. We hope it is illustrative of the value and impact of feedback received.

Based on what you told us, we...	National 5	Higher	Advanced Higher	Total
Progressed the original proposed modification	18	18	5	41
Amended the proposal in line with consultation feedback	36	33	18	87
Amended the proposal to ensure equity, in line with consultation feedback	1	1	18	20
Total	55	52	41	148