

National  
Qualifications  
2025

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## 2025 Practical Electronics

### National 5

## Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

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## General marking principles for National 5 Practical Electronics

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

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking instructions (MIs) for this assessment.
- (b) Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.
- (c) If a specific candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.

When marking National 5 Practical Electronics, there are some common issues which arise when considering candidates' answers.

There is often a range of acceptable answers which would sensibly answer a particular question. However, it is often difficult to anticipate all correct or partially correct responses to questions.

The answers given in the MIs represent ideal answers.

Additional acceptable answers are also given in the MIs to offer guidance to assist interpreting candidates' answers.

Also, advice on answers which are NOT acceptable or only attract partial marks may also be given in the MIs for some questions.

Markers are reminded that marks for each candidate response must always be assigned in accordance with the general marking principles and the specific marking instructions for the relevant question

- (d) There are **no half marks** awarded.
- (e) **In calculations**, marks should be awarded for non-standard symbols where the symbols are defined and the relationship is correct, or where the substitution shows that the relationship used is correct. This must be clear and unambiguous.
- (f) Unless a numerical question specifically requires evidence of working to be shown, full marks should be awarded for a correct final answer (including units if required) on its own.
- (g) Marks are provided for knowledge of relevant formulae alone. When a candidate writes down several formulae and does not select the correct one to continue with, for example by substituting values, no mark can be awarded.
- (h) Where a wrong answer to part of a question is carried forward and the wrong answer is then used correctly in the following part, the candidate should be given credit for the subsequent part or 'follow on'.
- (i) Rounding to an expected number of significant figures, the mark can be awarded for answers which have up to two figures more or one figure less than the number in the data with the fewest significant figures. (Note: the use of a recurrence dot, eg  $\dot{3}$ , would imply an infinite number of significant figures and would therefore not be acceptable.)
- (j) Where a question asks for or requires a specific number of reasons, examples, points, etc and the candidate provides more than the required number of responses then each incorrect response negates a correct response.

- (k) Marks are awarded only for a valid response to the question asked. For example, in response to questions that ask candidates to:
- **identify, name, give, or state**, they need only name or present in brief form;
  - **draw**, they must provide or complete a drawing, eg a circuit diagram, layout diagram or logic diagram;
  - **complete**, they must complete the response, eg completing a truth table, layout diagram, checklist, etc;
  - **describe**, they must provide a statement or structure of characteristics and/or features;
  - **explain**, they must relate cause and effect and/or make relationships between things clear;
  - **determine or calculate**, they must determine a number from given facts, figures or information;
  - **estimate**, they must determine an approximate value for something;
  - **justify**, they must give reasons to support their suggestions or conclusions, eg this might be by identifying an appropriate relationship and the effect of changing variables;
  - **show that**, they must use electronics (and mathematics) to prove something, eg a given value – *all steps, including the stated answer, must be shown*;
  - **predict**, they must suggest what may happen based on available information;
  - **suggest**, they must apply their knowledge and understanding of electronics to a new situation.
- A number of responses are acceptable: marks will be awarded for any suggestions that are supported by knowledge and understanding of electronics.

### Common issues with candidate responses:

#### Spelling

The incorrect spelling of technical terms should be ignored and candidates should be awarded the relevant mark. If answers can be interpreted and understood without any doubt as to the meaning, then the answer should be marked according to the MIs.

However, care should be taken to ensure that the incorrect spelling does not make the response ambiguous, leading to possible 'wrong electronics'. For example 'use a smaller resistor' instead of 'use a smaller resistance' is ambiguous, since a smaller resistor may not have a smaller resistance.

If the spelling (or handwriting) in an answer makes it difficult for you to interpret a candidate's intention, then do not award the mark.

#### Units

Use of R notation is acceptable eg 270R, 4k7, 6M8, etc.

For **numerical** and **non-numerical** answers which require a unit to be **stated** in an answer, the incorrect spelling of the unit is not usually penalised (if the unit can be clearly identified).

eg 'State the unit of capacitance.' Answer: 'farad'. The answer: 'farrads' would be acceptable.

Also for **numerical** and **non-numerical** answers, do not penalise upper/lower casing when the abbreviated version is given eg v, f, hZ.

Ohms ( $\Omega$ ) is an exception,  $\omega$  would not be an acceptable abbreviation.

However, for **numerical answers**, care must be taken to ensure the unit has the correct prefix, eg for an answer  $t = 0.005$  seconds,  $t = 5$  ms is acceptable but NOT  $t = 5$  Ms.


Some common units often attract wrong abbreviations in answers to numerical questions. When the abbreviation can be confused with a different unit then this would attract a unit penalty, eg sec or secs as an abbreviation for seconds is NOT acceptable.

### Standard form:

Candidates may fail to express an answer in standard form correctly.

For an answer  $t = 400\,000\text{ s}$ , then  $t = 4 \times 10^5\text{ s}$  would be correct but  $t = 4^5\text{ s}$  would be treated as an arithmetic error and the final mark would not be awarded.

### Relationship (equation) selection:

No marks should be awarded if a 'magic triangle', eg , was the only statement in a candidate's response.

The correct relationship must be stated, eg  $V = IR$  or  $R = \frac{V}{I}$ , to gain (1) mark.

### Incorrect answer carried forward:

Where an incorrect answer to a part of a question is carried forward

- within that part of the question, eg (a)(i) and (a)(ii)
- to the next part of the question, eg (a) and (b)

this should incur no further penalty, provided that it is used correctly.

Where a question requires a data value and the candidate has selected the wrong value, then either the candidate's wrong value may be used OR the correct data value in the subsequent answer and the response could gain full marks if correctly completed.

### Example:

(a) State the tolerance in the resistance of a resistor with a gold tolerance band.

Candidate's answer: 2%. This answer would attract zero marks.

(b) Calculate the maximum and minimum possible resistances of the resistor.

Candidate may use either the value given in part (a) OR the correct value for the tolerance and could gain full marks if correctly completed.

The 'Additional guidance' column of the MIs would indicate the comment 'or consistent with part...' to indicate that an incorrect answer may be carried forward.

### Standard three marker:

The examples below set out how to apportion marks to answers requiring calculations. These are the 'standard three marker' type of questions.

Unless a numerical question specifically requires evidence of working to be shown, full marks should be given for a correct answer to a numerical question even if the steps are not shown explicitly. The individual marks shown below are for use when marking partially correct answers.

Markers who are new to marking SQA Practical Electronics exams should study these issues closely, since the guidance illustrates common faults in candidates' answers to the 'standard three marker' type of question. Items 1-15 below illustrate how to apportion marks accordingly.

Experienced markers should also re-acquaint themselves with these examples before marking.

For some questions requiring numerical calculations, there may be alternative methods (eg alternative relationships) which would lead to a correct answer. These alternative methods of reaching the answer and how to apportion marks are also included in the specific MIs for these questions.



Sometimes, a question requires a calculation which does not fit into the 'standard three marker' type of response. Full guidance on how to apportion marks will be given in the MIs for that specific question.


**Question:**

The current in a resistor is 1.5 amperes when the potential difference across it is 7.5 volts. Calculate the resistance of the resistor. (3 marks)

Candidate answer	Mark + Comment
1. $V = IR$ $7.5 = 1.5R$ $R = 5.0 \Omega$	1 mark: formula 1 mark: substitution 1 mark: correct answer
2. $5.0 \Omega$	3 marks: correct answer
3. $5.0$	2 marks: unit missing
4. $4.0 \Omega$	0 marks: no evidence, wrong answer
5. $\_\_ \Omega$	0 marks: no working or final answer
6. $R = \frac{V}{I} = \frac{7.5}{1.5} = 4.0 \Omega$	2 marks: arithmetic error
7. $R = \frac{V}{I} = 4.0 \Omega$	1 mark: formula only
8. $R = \frac{V}{I} = \_\_ \Omega$	1 mark: formula only
9. $R = \frac{V}{I} = \frac{7.5}{1.5} = \_\_ \Omega$	2 marks: formula and substitution, no final answer
10. $R = \frac{V}{I} = \frac{7.5}{1.5} = 4.0$	2 marks: formula and substitution, wrong answer
11. $R = \frac{V}{I} = \frac{1.5}{7.5} = 5.0 \Omega$	1 mark: formula but wrong substitution
12. $R = \frac{V}{I} = \frac{75}{1.5} = 5.0 \Omega$	1 mark: formula but wrong substitution
13. $R = \frac{I}{V} = \frac{1.5}{7.5} = 5.0 \Omega$	0 marks: wrong formula
14. $V = IR$ $7.5 = 1.5 \times R$ $R = 0.2 \Omega$	2 marks: formula and substitution, arithmetic error
15. $V = IR$ $R = \frac{I}{V} = \frac{1.5}{7.5} = 0.2 \Omega$	1 mark: formula correct but wrong rearrangement of symbols

Marking instruction for each question

Question		Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance	
1.	(a)	Supplies electrical (potential) energy/charge (1 mark)	3	Do not accept: - Supplies power Power supply Stores power  Also accept: - Converts chemical energy to electrical  Do not accept old bulb symbol 	
		voltmeter (1 mark)			
		 (1 mark)			
	(b)	(i)	620Ω (1 mark) OR 620R OR 0.62kΩ	1	If given in ohms must have unit, otherwise 0 marks.  Also accept scientific notation with unit. $6.2 \times 10^2 \Omega$
		(ii)	(±)5(%)	1	Accept answer without tolerance and/or percentage. Do not accept + or - on its own.
		(iii)	(Maximum) = 651Ω OR 651R (1 mark) (Minimum) = 589Ω OR 589R (1 mark)	2	Accept answer consistent with 1(b) (i) & (ii). Accept in any order. Accept value only.  If maximum and minimum is incorrectly labelled award 0 marks.
2.			Any value greater than 10.0kΩ and less than 30.0kΩ (1 mark)	1	Accept a value only. Award correct mark if answer is out with table but must have correct unit.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
3.	(a)	(i)	$(R_T = 5 + 5)$ (1 mark) $R_T = 10 \Omega$	1	Accept 10R Must have correct unit.
		(ii)	$V = IR$ (1 mark) $20 = I \times 10$ (1 mark) $I = 2 \text{ A}$ (1 mark)	3	Accept answer consistent with 3(a)(i) 1 mark for both relationships. 1 mark for substitutions. 1 mark for final answer including unit. Also accept alternative methods. Do not accept the term "Amps" as units.
		(iii)	$P = I^2 R$ (1 mark) $P = I^2 \times 5$ (1 mark) $P = 20W$ (1 mark)	3	Accept answer consistent with 3(a)(ii) 1 mark for relationship. 1 mark for substitutions. 1 mark for final answer including unit. Also accept alternative formulas but with correct substitution.
	(b)	(i)	$\frac{1}{R_T} = \frac{1}{R_2} + \frac{1}{R_3}$ (1 mark) $\frac{1}{R_T} = \frac{1}{5} + \frac{1}{20}$ (1 mark) $R_T = 4\Omega$ (1 mark)	3	$R_T = \frac{R_1 R_2}{R_1 + R_2}$ Is an acceptable alternative method. If wrong equation used, eg, $R_T = \frac{1}{R_1} + \frac{1}{R_2}$ then (0) marks. Accept imprecise working towards a final answer. $\frac{1}{R_T} = 4\Omega$  accept Accept = 4 R Accept any subscript on component resistors.

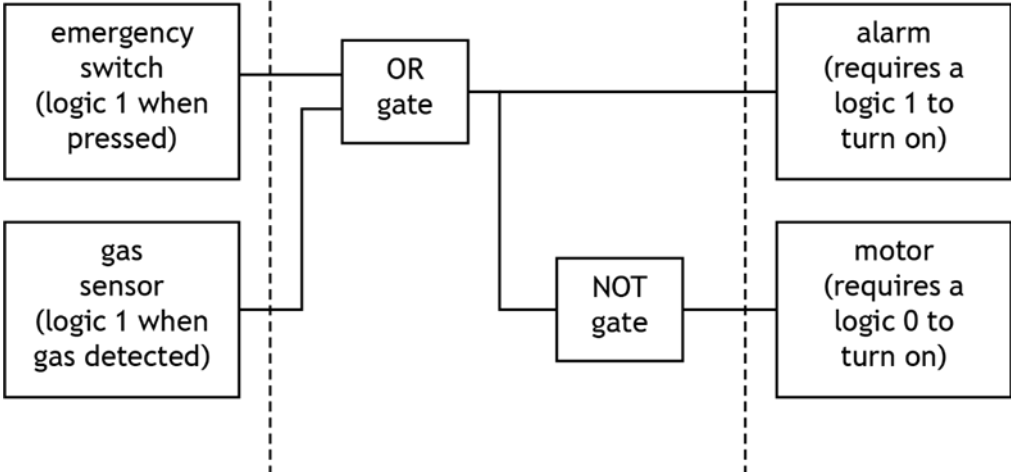
Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
3.	(b)	(ii)	$(R_T = 5 + 4)$ $R_T = 9 \Omega$	(1 mark) 1	Accept answer consistent with 3(b)(i)  Accept 9R  Must have correct unit.

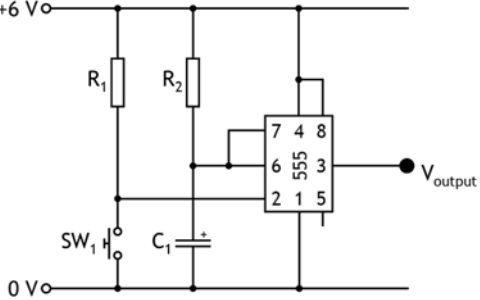
Question		Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance																																																															
4.	(a)	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>A</th> <th>B</th> <th>Output</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	A	B	Output	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1																																																	
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	(b)	(Logic State) 1 (1 mark)	1	Accept 1, High, ON																																																															
	(c)	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>A</th> <th>B</th> <th>C</th> <th>D</th> <th>E</th> <th>F</th> <th>Z</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	A	B	C	D	E	F	Z	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	1 mark per column. Apply follow through between columns.
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Question		Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
5.		Any four from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• voltage supply value too small.</li> <li>• LED orientation/polarity wrong way round.</li> <li>• protective resistor (<math>R_1</math>) for LED has too high a resistance value.</li> <li>• incorrect component symbol used to measure temperature (Thermistor not LDR).</li> </ul>	4	Errors can be listed in any order.  Do not accept resistor too big/large.
6.	(a)	Connector blocks <b>(1 mark)</b>  <b>OR</b>  Terminal blocks	1	Do not accept the following: Cable ties, heat shrink, velcro straps, spiral wrap or connector on its own.  Accept Solder and heat shrink. Accept screw terminal.
	(b)	Colour coding <b>(1 mark)</b>  <b>OR</b>  Wire/cable numbering	1	Any other suitable response.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
7.	(a)	(i)	Connect red wire of probe to +V <sub>supply</sub> and black wire to 0v or equivalent. (1 mark)	1	Do not accept: connect the probe to the supply rails (on its own).  Accept alternatives to V <sub>supply</sub> , +V <sub>s</sub> , +9V
		(ii)	Place the probe tip onto circuit at selected point. (1 mark)  Red LED lights. (1 mark)	2	Independent marks.
	(b)	(i)	T3 and T4 (1 mark)	1	Answer must state test point numbers.
		(ii)	Pin 7 is connected to 0v or ground. (1 mark)	1	Accept: negative terminal (of the supply).  Do not accept, “connected to the power supply” as it does not state high or low potential.  Do not accept, “connected directly to the power supply”.  Do not accept “PIN 7 is logic 0 or negative” on its own.
8.	(a)		20 V (1 mark)	1	Must include unit.
	(b)		T = (4 × 100 ms) = 400 ms (1 mark)  $f = \frac{1}{T}$ (1 mark)  f = 2.5 Hz (1 mark)	3	If incorrect setting chosen from oscilloscope award a maximum of 1 mark for the formula.  If period incorrect then award a maximum of 1 mark for the formula.  If milli omitted from the period of the wave, treat as a unit error and award a maximum of 2 marks, unless final answer is then quoted as 0.0025 kHz, in which case 3 marks may be awarded.  Do not accept the term “Secs” as unit for seconds.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
9.	(a)	(i)	20kΩ (1 mark)  OR 20000Ω  OR 20K	1	Must have unit or be in R notation.  Allow a tolerance of + or - half a box.
		(ii)	$V_2 = \frac{R_2}{R_1 + R_2} \times V_s$ (1 mark)  $V_2 = \frac{20}{(20+10)} \times 6$ (1 mark)  $V_2 = 4V$ (1 mark)	3	Accept (20/30) × 6  1 mark for Ohm's Law anywhere. 1 mark for both substitutions. 1 mark for final answer including unit.  Or by voltage ratio method. $V_2/V_s = R_2/R_{total}$ $V_2/6 = 20/30$ $V_2 = 4V$  If correct answer with unit and no working award 3 marks.  Accept follow through rule from Q9 a(i).
	(b)	(i)	LDR resistance increases and voltage across it increases. (1 mark)  Transistor switches on at a certain voltage/0.7v (1 mark)  Relay activates/turns on/closes (1 mark)	3	Independent marks  Accept Transistor switches on/switch on voltage at 0.7v  Answer must include the following three key points: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LDR resistance increases</li><li>• voltage increases to turn on Transistor at certain voltage</li><li>• turns on RELAY (external circuit switches on)</li></ul> If transistor switching voltage is given as 2v award a maximum of 2 marks.
		(ii)	Diode (1 mark)	1	Do not accept the circuit symbol, the name must be given.

Question	Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
10.	<p>1 mark for correctly identifying the three separate sections of the system.</p> <p>1 mark for selecting both input devices.</p> <p>1 mark for selecting correct gates.</p> <p>1 mark for selecting both outputs.</p> <p>1 mark for correctly linking the inputs to the gates.</p> <p>1 mark for correctly linking the outputs to the gates.</p>	6	<p>All selected elements must be shown as part of a system/block diagram. (Arrows are NOT required on the connections).</p> <p>Accept switch, alarm, motor and gas sensor as block descriptors.</p> <p>Max 5 marks if not block diagram.</p> <p>Do not accept logic gate symbols.</p>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> <div data-bbox="485 880 560 909">input</div> <div data-bbox="860 880 962 909">process</div> <div data-bbox="1254 880 1345 909">output</div> </div>  <pre> graph LR     subgraph input         A[emergency switch (logic 1 when pressed)]         B[gas sensor (logic 1 when gas detected)]     end     subgraph process         C[OR gate]         D[NOT gate]     end     subgraph output         E[alarm (requires a logic 1 to turn on)]         F[motor (requires a logic 0 to turn on)]     end     A --- C     B --- C     C --- E     B --- D     D --- F   </pre>			

Question	Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
11.	<p>Both power rails labelled with nodes. (1 mark)</p> <p>Power rails to IC. (4,8 to +6V and 1 to 0V) (1 mark)</p> <p>SW<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>1</sub> in series between power rails, correctly positioned. (1 mark)</p> <p>R<sub>2</sub> and C<sub>1</sub> in series between power rails with C<sub>1</sub> correctly orientated. (1 mark)</p> <p>Pins 6, 7 and 2 connected, 5 not connected and correct connection of V<sub>output</sub> to pin 3 of 555 timer. Node must be included. (1 mark)</p> <p>Each component must be identifiable and correctly used circuit symbols. (accept either values or identifiers). (1 mark)</p>	6	 <p>Accept IC1, 555 or NE555 for chip identifier.</p>

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]