



National
Qualifications
2026

2026 Practical Electronics

National 5

Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

These marking instructions have been prepared by examination teams for use by Qualifications Scotland appointed markers when marking external course assessments.

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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 $3\cdot$, 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 (Ω) is an exception, ω 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 Qualifications Scotland 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)

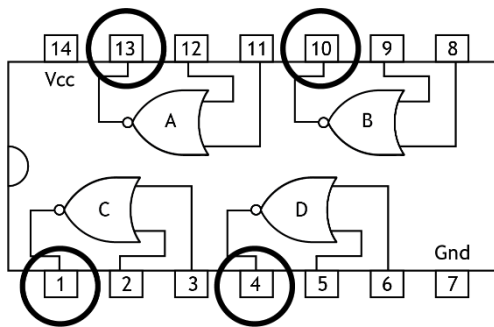
Candidate answer	Mark + Comment
1. $V = IR$ $7.5 = 1.5R$ $R = 5.0 \Omega$	1 mark: formula 1 mark: substitution 1 mark: correct answer
2. 5.0Ω	3 marks: correct answer
3. 5.0	2 marks: unit missing
4. 4.0Ω	0 marks: no evidence, wrong answer
5. $___ \Omega$	0 marks: no working or final answer
6. $R = \frac{V}{I} = \frac{7.5}{1.5} = 4.0 \Omega$	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)		Resistor (1 mark)  (1 mark) Changes resistance with changes in light intensity. (1 mark)	3	LURD on its own not accepted, needs further explanation.
	(b)	(i)	1500 Ω OR 1.5 k Ω OR 1K5	1	Accept: 1500R, $1.5 \times 10^3 \Omega$ Answer must have correct ohms unit or correct R notation.
		(ii)	($\pm$) 10 (%)	1	Accept correct answer without percentage symbol. If -10 or +10 given on their own, don't award marks.
		(iii)	(Maximum=) 1650 (Ω) (1 mark) (Minimum=) 1350 (Ω) (1 mark)	2	Accept answer consistent with 1b(i) & 1b(ii). Accept in any order. Accept without max/min labelling, but if given must be correct responses. No penalty for omitting units as "in ohms" is stated in question.
	(c)		2M2	1	Accept correct answer converted in different format. Accept a tick or circle of the final answer.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
2.			Any two from • wear eye protection • use stand • use heat proof mat • avoid breathing in fumes • well-ventilated room • hold soldering iron correctly	2	Any acceptable alternate answer. Any mention of clothing needs a justification.
3.	(a)	(i)	$R_t = 20 + 16 = 36 \Omega$	1	Accept $36R$ Must have correct unit.
		(ii)	$V = I R$ $9 = I \times 36$ $I = 0.25 \text{ A}$	3	Accept answer consistent with 3(a)(i).
		(iii)	$P = I^2 R$ $P = 0.25^2 \times 16$ $P = 1 \text{ W}$	3	Accept answer consistent with 3(a)(ii) with correct substitutions. 1 mark for both relationships. 1 mark for substitutions. 1 mark for final answer including unit. Alternative method $V = IR$ & $P = V^2 R$ OR Voltage divider equation method.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
3.	(b)	(i)	$1/R_t = 1/R_1 + 1/R_2$ $1/R_t = 1/20 + 1/5$ $R_t = 4 \Omega$	3	$R_T = \frac{R_1 R_2}{R_1 + R_2}$ Is an acceptable alternative method. If wrong equation used, eg $RT = \frac{1}{R1} + \frac{1}{R2}$ 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.
		(ii)	$R_t = 4 + 16 = 20 \Omega$	1	Must have correct unit. Accept 20R Accept answer consistent with 3(b) (i).

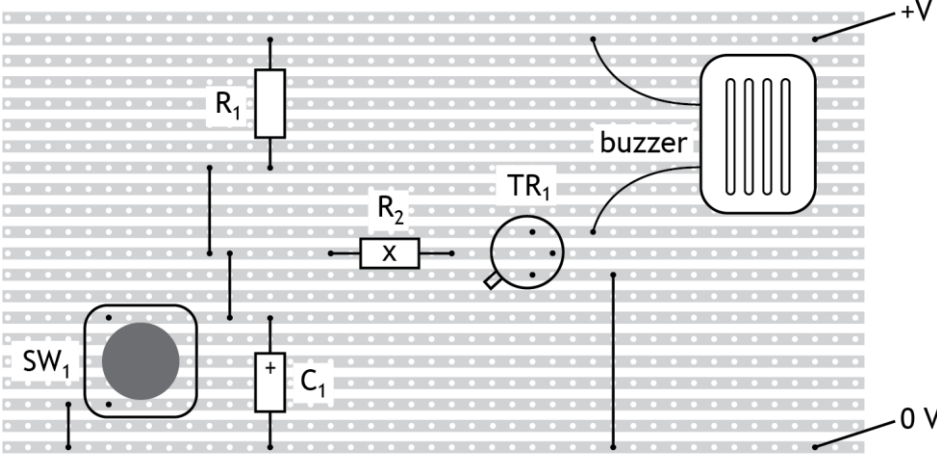
Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance																																																															
4.	(a)	(i)	7402 (quad 2 input NOR gates) OR Quad 2 input NOR (gates)	1	Do not accept NOR on its own.																																																															
		(ii)	Any one from 1, 4, 10 or 13.	1	Accept circles or arrows.  Award 1 mark if candidate circles more than one correct output pin. Award 0 marks if candidate identifies any one of the pins: 2,3,5,6,7,8,9,11,12,14. The candidate has provided more than the required number of responses then each incorrect response negates a correct response.																																																															
		(iii)	(logic state) 1	1																																																																
	(b)		<table><tr><th>A</th><th>B</th><th>C</th><th>D</th><th>E</th><th>F</th><th>Z</th></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>1</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></table>	A	B	C	D	E	F	Z	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	1 mark for each column. Apply follow through between columns.
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Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
5.	(a)		Accept one of the following: • help to identify wires between subsystems • identify part(s) of a circuit that has the same potential/voltage/signal • follow the same signal/logic state/potential between components in a circuit • test for continuity of the same wire between subsystems/components	1	
	(b)	(i)	(wire) 3	1	
		(ii)	Any one of the following: • reduce voltage across LED • reduce (limit) current in LED • protect the LED • limit the power (dissipated in/developed in/supplied to) the LED	1	Answers must reference LED. Do not accept: • voltage ‘through’ or current ‘across’ on their own • limit/reduce current across the LED • reduce voltage in LED • prevent LED explode
		(iii)	• (connect probe) at test point E • (connect other probe) at test point F  • turn dial to	3	1 mark for each correct test point stated. 1 mark for the correct dial setting. Must refer to test points. Do not accept wire number(s) on their own eg 4 only or 4 and 5. If wire number used, must refer to top and bottom of wire. Must use the symbol used on the given multimeter for setting.
6.			• voltage supply value <u>too small</u> • <u>protective resistor</u> for LED too large a value • LED incorrect polarity/orientation	3	Do not accept too large a resistor.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
7.	(a)		$V_2 = \frac{R_2}{R_1 + R_2} \times V_s \quad (1 \text{ mark})$ $V_2 = \frac{1500}{1500 + 1000} \times 5 \quad (1 \text{ mark})$ $V_2 = 3.0 \text{ V} \quad (1 \text{ mark})$	3	Accept $(1.5/2.5) \times 5$ Accept 3 V $V = IR$ $5.0 = I \times 2500$ $I = 0.002 \text{ (A)}$ OR $2 \times 10^{-3} \text{ (A)}$ $V = IR$ $V = 0.002 \times 1500$ OR $V = 2 \times 10^{-3} \times 1500$ $V = 3.0 \text{ V}$ OR $V = IR$ $5.0 = I \times 2.5 \quad \text{from } 2.5 \text{ (k}\Omega\text{)}$ $I = 2 \text{ (mA)}$ $V = IR$ $V = 2 \times 1.5 \quad \text{from } 2\text{(mA)} \times 1.5\text{(k}\Omega\text{)}$ $V = 3.0 \text{ V}$ 1 mark for Ohm's Law anywhere. 1 mark for both substitutions. 1 mark for final answer including unit. OR by voltage ratio method: $V_2/V_s = R_2/R_{\text{total}}$ $V_2/5.0 = 1500/2500$ $V_2 = 3.0 \text{ V}$ OR $V_2/5 = 1.5/2.5$ If correct answer given with no working award 3 marks.

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance																																
7.	(b)		(As the temperature increases) the resistance of thermistor decreases so voltage across thermistor decreases. (1 mark) Voltage across variable resistor increases. (1 mark) Transistor/MOSFET switches on and buzzer sounds. (1 mark)	3	Independent marks. Accept: ‘transistor’ in place of MOSFET. Do not accept: npn transistor or pnp transistor in place of MOSFET. Accept: MOSFET conducts. Ignore any value for switching voltage stated.																																
	(c)		To vary the temperature at which the buzzer sounds.	1	Accept change, alter and set.																																
8.			<table><tr><th>Supplier</th><th>Component</th><th>Product code</th><th>Cost (p)</th></tr><tr><td>JIMSON</td><td>LM741CN</td><td>IC-0258</td><td>56</td></tr><tr><td>SWIFT</td><td>8-way DIL</td><td>SK-0080</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>SWIFT</td><td>LED 5mm std red</td><td>SC-0155</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>JIMSON</td><td>330R</td><td>CR 656</td><td>1•2</td></tr><tr><td>JIMSON</td><td>50 K</td><td>CR 654</td><td>2•5</td></tr><tr><td>SWIFT</td><td>10K Potentiometer</td><td>PT-0744</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td>JIMSON</td><td>Thermistor</td><td>TH 116</td><td>22</td></tr></table>	Supplier	Component	Product code	Cost (p)	JIMSON	LM741CN	IC-0258	56	SWIFT	8-way DIL	SK-0080	10	SWIFT	LED 5mm std red	SC-0155	4	JIMSON	330R	CR 656	1•2	JIMSON	50 K	CR 654	2•5	SWIFT	10K Potentiometer	PT-0744	55	JIMSON	Thermistor	TH 116	22	5	1 mark for each correct row.
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Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
9.			1 mark for correctly identifying the three sections of the system with dashed lines (- - -). 1 mark for selecting both input devices. 1 mark for selecting both outputs. 1 mark for selecting both gates correctly. 1 mark for linking both inputs to gates correctly. 1 mark for linking the outputs to gates correctly.	6	All selected elements must be shown as part of a system/block diagram. (arrows are NOT required on the connections). Logic gate symbols not accepted. Accept switch and temp sensor as block descriptors.
			<pre> graph LR subgraph input TS[temperature sensor (logic 0 when cold)] MS[manual switch (logic 1 when closed)] end subgraph process NOT[NOT] AND[AND] end subgraph output HE[heating element (logic 1 when on)] LED[LED (logic 1 when on)] end TS --> NOT MS --> AND NOT --> AND AND --> HE AND --> LED </pre>		

Question		Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
10.		1 mark for labels. 1 mark for break(s): there should be a break across R_2. 1 mark for SW_1, with solder points, connected across C_1 and connected to 0 V with appropriate links, breaks and connected to R_2. 1 mark for branch containing R_1 and C_1 with appropriate links and breaks. 1 mark for connecting TR_1 to 0 V and +V through buzzer, with appropriate links and breaks. Layout diagram 	5	'Footprint' of components should be of an appropriate size. If candidate used circuit symbols, deduct label mark.

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]