

# Next Generation Higher National Grading Pack

## Higher National Certificate in Physical Activity and Health

Group award code GT6A 47

Valid from session 2024 to 2025

**Prototype grading pack for use in pilot delivery only  
(version 0.1) September 2024**

This grading pack provides information about the process of grading the group award, and should be used alongside the Educator Guide to ensure consistent delivery and assessment year on year.

This pack is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the information you need to grade the group award.

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This edition: September 2024 (version 0.1)

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# Overview

## Introduction

This pack:

- ◆ is designed to be used alongside the Educator Guide for this group award
- ◆ provides essential information on the process of grading the group award

## Grading in NextGen Higher Nationals

Learners who pass NextGen: HN qualifications receive one of the following grade outcomes for the qualification as a whole:

- ◆ Achieved with Distinction
- ◆ Achieved with Merit
- ◆ Achieved

You assess and judge each learner's performance across the key aspects of the group award to determine their whole qualification grade. You must align judgements with the whole qualification grade descriptors, which are:

### **Achieved with Distinction**

This candidate consistently demonstrates outstanding knowledge, understanding and application of skills. Thinking and working independently to an exceptional standard, they apply excellent judgement and creative problem-solving skills. They achieve or exceed agreed aims by confidently applying an extensive range of meta-skills and working very effectively with colleagues and peers.

### **Achieved with Merit**

This candidate demonstrates an excellent level of knowledge, understanding and application of skills. Thinking and working independently to a high standard, they demonstrate good judgement and effective problem-solving skills. They achieve agreed aims by applying a broad range of meta-skills and working effectively with colleagues and peers.

### **Achieved**

This candidate demonstrates thorough knowledge, understanding and application of skills. They think and work independently and use their judgement to find solutions to problems. They achieve agreed aims by applying a range of meta-skills and working well with colleagues and peers.

Successful learners will receive their grade, along with the grade descriptor text, on their commemorative certificate.

In addition, you assess individual units on a pass or fail basis. Each unit has evidence requirements that learners must achieve before you can consider them for whole qualification grading.

You make judgements about learners' quality of assessment evidence using a grading matrix based on important criteria in the qualification.

### **Grading and meta-skills**

Meta-skills are a key part of the NextGen: HN qualifications and learners develop them throughout the group award. Competence in individual meta-skills is not assessed or graded. For example, the qualification does not judge the quality of learners' feeling or creativity, or their specific progress in any given meta-skill. Rather, it is the process of development the learner goes through that contributes to the whole qualification grade judgement. This means learners should provide evidence of planning, developing and reflecting on their meta-skills. The grading matrix includes criteria on meta-skills, which you should use to support this judgement. See the NextGen: HN Meta-skills, Outcome and Assessment Guidance document for support with assessing meta-skills.

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# Grading model and guidance

## Grading model

### Grading

The grading model helps subject teams to holistically judge each learner's performance across the key aspects of the qualification, and to decide on an overall qualification grade.

Learners are assessed against selected criteria that reflects course performance and allows subject teams to apply an appropriate grade.

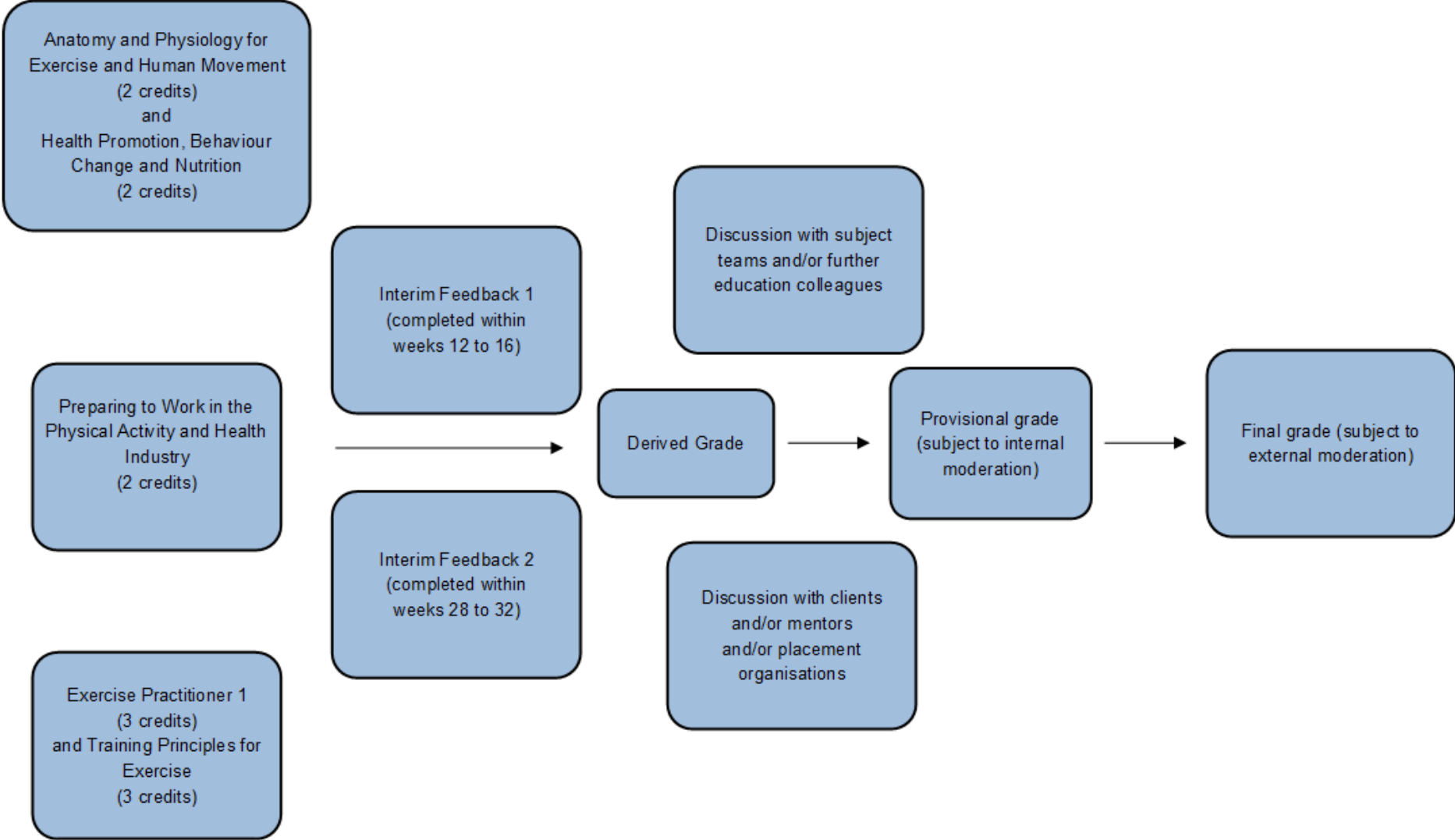
Grading for the HNC Physical Activity and Health is based on learners successfully completing the full 15 credits. However, grades are based on the performance of learners across the following 12 mandatory credits:

- ◆ Anatomy and Physiology for Exercise and Human Movement (2 credits)
- ◆ Training Principles for Exercise (3 credits)
- ◆ Exercise Practitioner 1 (3 credits)
- ◆ Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition (2 credits)
- ◆ Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry (2 credits)

Subject teams should grade candidates using the criteria and potential evidence sources, and make those professional judgements based on the statements that differentiate between grades. All grading decisions are subject to normal internal and external quality assurance criteria. The grading scheme is Achieved, Achieved with Merit, or Achieved with Distinction, with clear definitions provided for each.

We expect that in addition to their HNC certification, learners receive a transcript of their achievements produced by SQA or the centre.

# Grading model diagram



## **Worked example of grading model**

The HNC in Physical Activity and Health contains several of the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) professional standards, and all skills in each of the units must demonstrate minimum competence in line with the professional standard. The following worked examples are graded using the Grading Matrix below.

### **Candidate A — Achieved**

The candidate has demonstrated a thorough understanding of the key concepts that underpin the knowledge and understanding of the outcomes contained in the mandatory units. The candidate has met the minimum evidence requirements of practical skills to satisfy the skills sections within each of the outcomes across the mandatory units. The client portfolio is of a minimum standard, and the candidate has not included any additional detail to support a higher grade.

### **Candidate B — Achieved with Merit**

The candidate has demonstrated an excellent level of understanding of the key concepts that underpin the knowledge and understanding of the outcomes contained in the mandatory units. The candidate has consistently demonstrated an excellent level of practical skills to satisfy the skills sections in each of the outcomes across the mandatory units. The client portfolio has a good level of additional detail to support a higher grade.

### **Candidate C — Achieved with Distinction**

The candidate has demonstrated an outstanding level of understanding of the key concepts that underpin the knowledge and understanding of the outcomes contained in the mandatory units. The candidate has consistently demonstrated an outstanding level of practical skills to satisfy the skills sections in each of the outcomes across the mandatory units. The client portfolio has an excellent level of additional detail to support a higher grade.

## Grading matrix

The following guidance should be used to support grading judgements on learner evidence for Physical Activity and Health.

You may wish to develop a mapping document to evidence where learners generate evidence for meta-skills and Learning for Sustainability within the qualification to help with grading decisions.

Skill	Achieved	Achieved with Merit	Achieved with Distinction
Criterion 1: Underpinning knowledge and understanding of key concepts and/or skills.	The candidate has <b>demonstrated basic knowledge and understanding</b> of the key concepts and/or skills that underpin the role of an exercise practitioner.	The candidate has <b>more often than not demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding</b> of the key concepts and/or skills that underpin the role of an exercise practitioner <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements</b> .	The candidate has <b>consistently demonstrated high levels of knowledge and understanding</b> of the key concepts and/or skills that underpin the role of an exercise practitioner.

### Guidance

Candidate evidence to support grading decisions may include SOLAR assessments, gym induction plans, individual training interventions, group-based training interventions, closed-book assessments, reports and worksheets.



Skill	Achieved	Achieved with Merit	Achieved with Distinction
Criterion 2: Application of skills as an exercise practitioner (versatile and/or adaptable).	The candidate has <b>demonstrated a basic application</b> of the skills required to carry out the role of an exercise practitioner.	The candidate has <b>more often than not demonstrated sound application</b> of the skills required to carry out the role of an exercise practitioner <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements.</b>	The candidate has <b>consistently demonstrated a high level in their application</b> of the skills required to carry out the role of an exercise practitioner.

### Guidance

Candidate evidence to support grading decisions may include individual and group gym inductions, formative observations, summative observations, self-reflective evaluations, work placement supervisor or mentor reports, work placement logbook and work placement self-reflective evaluations.

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Skill	Achieved	Achieved with Merit	Achieved with Distinction
<p>Criterion 3: Thinking and working independently within a physical activity and health sector or environment (self-reflective practice).</p>	<p>The candidate has <b>demonstrated the basic skills to work independently and applied a good level of thinking</b> to their role as an exercise practitioner within the physical activity and health sector.</p>	<p>The candidate has <b>more often than not demonstrated a sound level of skills to work independently and applied a coherent level of thinking</b> to their role as an exercise practitioner within the physical activity and health sector <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements.</b></p>	<p>The candidate has <b>consistently demonstrated a high level of skill to work independently and applied an outstanding level of thinking</b> to their role as an exercise practitioner within the physical activity and health sector.</p>

### Guidance

Candidate evidence to support grading decisions may include work placement supervisor or mentor reports, work placement logbook, work placement self-reflective evaluations, delivery of individual training interventions, delivery of group-based training interventions, self-reflective evaluations for inductions, and self-reflective evaluations from delivery of individual and group training interventions.

Skill	Achieved	Achieved with Merit	Achieved with Distinction
Criterion 4: Application of judgement and analysis to support and work with a client or clients.	The candidate has <b>applied basic judgement and analysis</b> to support and work with a client or clients.	The candidate has <b>more often than not applied a sound level of judgement and analysis</b> to support and work with a client or clients <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements.</b>	The candidate has <b>applied a high level of judgement and analysis</b> to support and work with a client or clients.

### Guidance

Candidate evidence to support grading decisions may include individual and group induction plans, individual training interventions, group-based training interventions and work placement logbook.

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Skill	Achieved	Achieved with Merit	Achieved with Distinction
<p>Criterion 5: Effectively plan and manage time to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ work with clients</li> <li>◆ meet agreed submission deadlines</li> <li>◆ maintain effective attendance and timekeeping</li> <li>◆ produce quality work</li> <li>◆ engage with peers and colleagues</li> <li>◆ communicate effectively (personal issues and medical issues)</li> </ul>	<p>The candidate has demonstrated the <b>ability to meet agreed key deadlines</b> but <b>has submitted work late</b> on more than one occasion.</p> <p>The candidate <b>has not communicated effectively in a consistent manner</b> in relation to their attendance or timekeeping on the course.</p>	<p>The candidate has <b>more often than not demonstrated a sound</b> ability to manage workload to agreed key deadlines, that has exceeded minimum requirements, but <b>may have submitted work late</b> on one occasion.</p> <p>The candidate <b>has communicated effectively in a consistent manner</b> in relation to their attendance or timekeeping on the course.</p>	<p>The candidate has demonstrated the ability to <b>confidently manage</b> workload and <b>consistently met</b> key deadlines and <b>has not submitted work late</b>.</p> <p>The candidate <b>has communicated effectively in a consistent manner</b> in relation to their attendance or timekeeping on the course.</p>

## Guidance

Evidence to support grading decisions may include first and second attempt submission deadlines being met, effective time management throughout the academic session, records of attendance and timekeeping, and the ability to work as part of a team or group.

Skill	Achieved	Achieved with Merit	Achieved with Distinction
<p>Criterion 6: Confidently apply a range of professional behaviours to achieve agreed aims when working with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ clients or participants</li> <li>◆ colleagues</li> <li>◆ peers</li> </ul>	<p>The candidate has <b>applied a basic range of professional behaviours</b> and <b>has worked well</b> with clients, colleagues, and peers to achieve an agreed aim.</p>	<p>The candidate has <b>more often than not confidently applied a broad range of professional behaviours</b> and <b>has worked effectively</b> with clients, colleagues and peers to achieve an agreed aim.</p>	<p>The candidate has <b>confidently applied an extensive range of professional behaviours</b> and <b>has worked very effectively</b> with clients, colleagues, and peers to achieve an agreed aim.</p>

### Guidance

Evidence to support grading decisions may include the ability to work as part of a team or group, work placement logbook, work placement supervisor or mentor report, and meta-skills self-evaluation.

## Meta-skills and grading

Skill	Achieved	Achieved with Merit	Achieved with Distinction
Develops meta-skills.	<p>Adequately engages with the process of meta-skills development in the context of the HNC by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ carrying out self-assessment of meta-skills, giving reasons for ratings or judgements made</li> <li>◆ setting clear and measurable goals plus action strategies, to develop meta-skills in all three categories</li> <li>◆ using reflective practice strategies to track progress and analyse the links between course activities, experiences, and meta-skills development</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrates a clear commitment to the process of meta-skills development in the context of the qualification by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ carrying out self-assessment of meta-skills, giving some insightful reasons for ratings or judgements made</li> <li>◆ setting clear and measurable goals plus action strategies to develop meta-skills in all three categories</li> <li>◆ using reflective practice strategies to track progress and demonstrate some insight into the impact of their course activities and experiences on their meta-skills development</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrates strong commitment to the process of meta-skills development in the context of the qualification by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ carrying out self-assessment of meta-skills, giving some insightful reasons for ratings or judgements made</li> <li>◆ setting clear and measurable goals plus action strategies to develop meta-skills in all three categories, and updating these as required</li> <li>◆ using reflective practice strategies very effectively to track progress and demonstrate insight into the impact of their course activities and experiences on their meta-skills development</li> </ul>

### Guidance

You must make your judgement alongside the separate meta-skills assessment guidance produced.

This guidance gives, in detail, the expectations of learners' engagement with meta-skills, in the context of their qualification.

Competence in individual meta-skills is not being judged here. For example, the quality of learners' feeling or creativity isn't the focus. Rather, it is the process of development learners go through — planning, developing, and reflecting — that should be evidenced and assessed.

Although one unit has a meta-skills outcome, evidence of meta-skills development can be gathered from any activity at any time during the HNC. For meaningful reflection to take place, the process of meta-skills development should happen continually throughout the HNC. The range of contexts in which this can happen is very wide and dependent on the sector, as well as individual preferences. Each unit signposts opportunities for meta-skills development.

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# Information for centres

## Equality and inclusion

The units in this group award are designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible, with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You should take into account the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods, or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page:

[www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used in this qualification should be internally verified according to your centre's policies and SQA's guidelines.

SQA carries out external verification to ensure that internal assessment meets the national guidelines for this qualification.

Further information on internal and external verification is available in SQA's [Guide to Assessment](#).

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# Glossary

**SQA credit value:** the credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

**SCQF:** the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF, visit the SCQF website: [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk).

**SCQF credit points:** SCQF credit points provide a way of describing and comparing the amount of learning required to complete a qualification at a given level of the framework. 1 National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. 1 National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and 1 SQA Advanced unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

**SCQF levels:** the level a qualification is assigned in the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. SQA Advanced Certificates and SQA Advanced Diplomas are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8, respectively. SQA Advanced units are usually at levels 6 to 9 and graded units at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2 to 6 and are usually made up of National Units, which are available from SCQF levels 2 to 7.

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# Administrative information

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**Published:** September 2024 (version 0.1)

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## History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

Note: please check [SQA's website](#) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this guide, and check SQA's APS Navigator to ensure you are using the most up-to-date qualification structure.

If a unit is revised:

- ◆ no new centres can be approved to offer the previous version of the unit
- ◆ centres should only enter learners for the previous version of the unit if they can complete it before its finish date

For further information on SQA's Next Generation Higher National Qualifications please contact [nextgen@sqa.org.uk](mailto:nextgen@sqa.org.uk).