

**HIGHER  
NATIONAL**



# Next Generation Higher National Grading Pack

## Higher National Diploma in Physical Activity and Health

Group award code GV1P 48

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.

The information in this pack may be reproduced in support of SQA qualifications only on a non-commercial basis. If it is reproduced, SQA must be clearly acknowledged as the source. If it is to be reproduced for any other purpose, written permission must be obtained from [permissions@sqa.org.uk](mailto:permissions@sqa.org.uk).

This edition: September 2024 (version 0.1)

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2024

# Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Overview</b>                         | <b>1</b>  |
| Introduction                            | 1         |
| Grading in NextGen Higher Nationals     | 1         |
| <b>Grading model and guidance</b>       | <b>3</b>  |
| Grading model                           | 3         |
| Grading model diagram                   | 4         |
| Worked example of grading model         | 5         |
| Candidate A — Achieved                  | 5         |
| Candidate B — Achieved with Merit       | 5         |
| Candidate C — Achieved with Distinction | 5         |
| Grading matrix                          | 6         |
| Meta-skills and grading                 | 14        |
| <b>Information for centres</b>          | <b>16</b> |
| Equality and inclusion                  | 16        |
| Internal and external verification      | 16        |
| <b>Glossary</b>                         | <b>17</b> |
| Administrative information              | 18        |
| History of changes                      | 18        |

# 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.

Draft

# Grading model and guidance

## Grading model

The grading model enables 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.

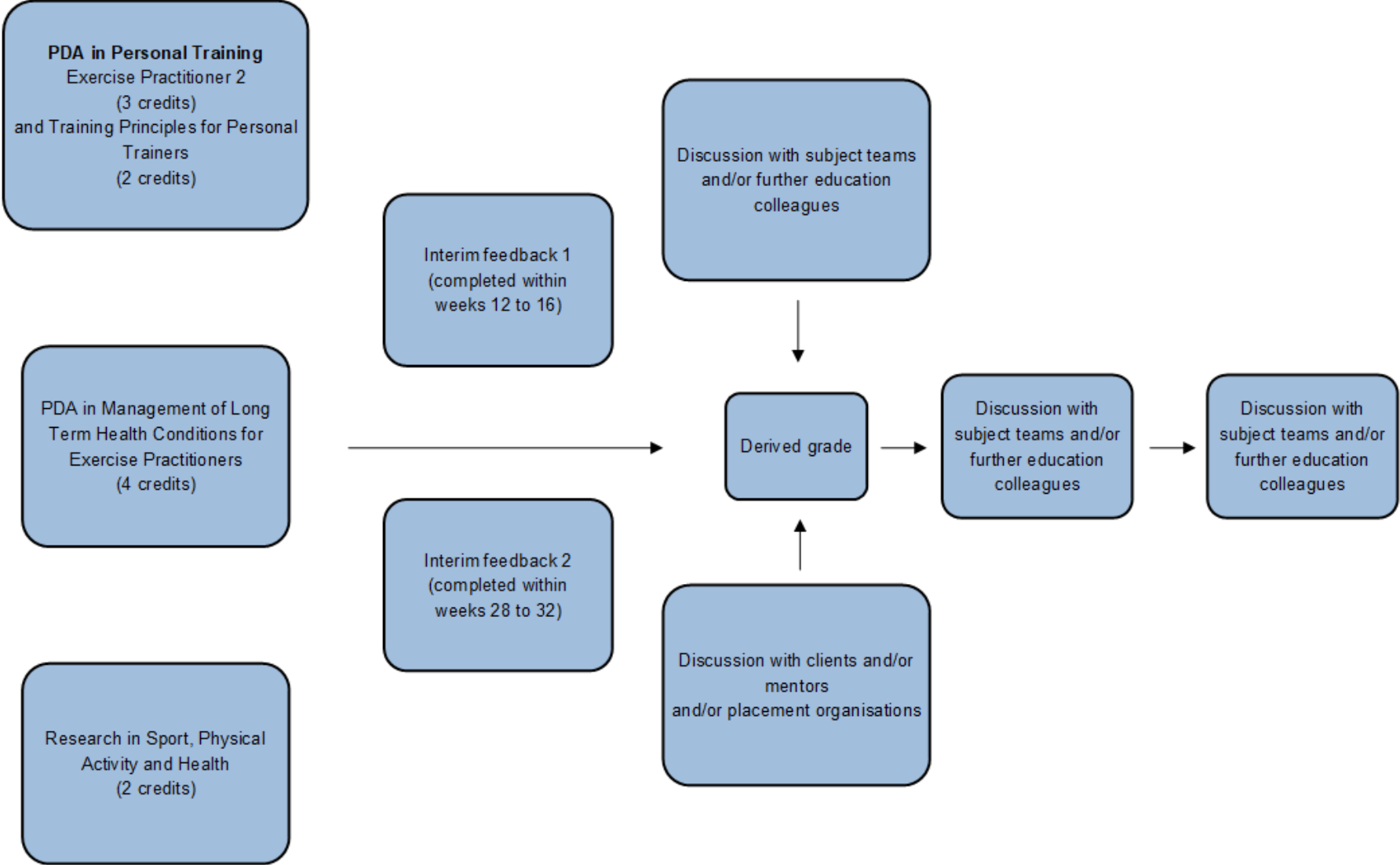
Grading for the HND Physical Activity and Health is based on learners successfully completing the full 15 credits. However, grades are based on the performance of learners across the following 11 mandatory credits:

- ◆ Exercise Practitioner 2 (3 credits)
- ◆ Training Principles for Personal Trainers (2 credits)
- ◆ Management of Long Term Health Conditions for Exercise Practitioners (4 credits)
- ◆ Research in Sport, Physical Activity and Health (2 credits)

Course 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 HND certification, learners receive a transcript of their achievements produced by SQA or the centre.

# Grading model diagram



## **Worked example of grading model**

As the HND in Physical Activity and Health contains several of the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) professional standards, 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 basic 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 candidate evidence and/or 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 more often than not a sound level of understanding of the key concepts that underpin the knowledge and understanding of the outcomes contained in the mandatory units. The candidate has more often than not demonstrated a sound level of practical skills to satisfy the skills sections in each of the outcomes across the mandatory units. The candidate evidence and/or portfolio has exceeded the minimum standard and included additional detail to support a higher grade.

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

The candidate has consistently demonstrated a high 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 a high 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

Candidates generate evidence to support each of the criteria in the following table.

The following guidance should be used to support grading judgements on learner evidence for HND 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: Demonstrate an awareness of legislative changes and government initiatives in physical activity and public health. Use a range of credible sources to inform scope of practice. | The candidate has demonstrated <b>basic</b> awareness of legislative changes in government initiatives in physical activity and public health. They have used a <b>small range</b> of credible sources to inform their scope of practice. | The candidate has <b>more often than not</b> demonstrated a <b>sound</b> awareness of legislative changes in government initiatives in physical activity and public health. They have used a <b>broad range</b> of credible sources to inform their scope of practice <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements.</b> | The candidate has <b>consistently</b> demonstrated <b>high levels</b> of awareness of legislative changes in government initiatives in physical activity and public health. They have used an <b>extensive range</b> of credible sources to inform their scope of practice. |

## Guidance

Evidence to support grading decisions may include extended response essays or reports; individual and group presentations; infographics, leaflets or posters; nutritional analysis and reporting; individual training intervention plans; case study analysis; research investigation; research proposals and academic reports; business proposals; and CPD records.

There may also be an opportunity for research investigation, research proposals and research academic reports depending on the approach and subject area the learner chooses.



| Skill   | Achieved  | Achieved with Merit  | Achieved with Distinction  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p>Criterion 2: Underpinning knowledge and understanding of exercise prescription and key behaviour change strategies to support clients in their physical activity and health journey.</p> | <p>The candidate has demonstrated <b>basic</b> knowledge and understanding of exercise prescription and key behaviour change strategies to support clients in their physical activity and health journey.</p> | <p>The candidate has <b>more often than not</b> demonstrated <b>sound</b> knowledge and understanding of exercise prescription and key behaviour change strategies to support clients in their physical activity and health journey <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements.</b></p> | <p>The candidate has <b>consistently</b> demonstrated <b>high</b> levels of knowledge and understanding of exercise prescription and key behaviour change strategies to support clients in their physical activity and health journey.</p> |

## Guidance

Evidence to support grading decisions may include extended response essays or reports; individual and group presentations; infographics, leaflets or posters; pre-screening assessment and analysis; nutritional analysis and reporting; health and performance testing and assessment; individual training intervention plans; and self-reflective client evaluations.

| Skill   | Achieved  | Achieved with Merit  | Achieved with Distinction  |
|---|---|--|--|
| Criterion 3: Underpinning knowledge and understanding of long-term health conditions management through exercise interventions and collaborative working with other industry professionals. | The candidate has demonstrated <b>basic</b> knowledge and understanding of long-term health conditions management through exercise interventions and collaborative working with other industry professionals. | The candidate has <b>more often than not</b> demonstrated <b>sound</b> knowledge and understanding of long-term health conditions management through exercise interventions and collaborative working with other industry professionals <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements.</b> | The candidate has <b>consistently</b> demonstrated <b>high</b> levels of knowledge and understanding of long-term health conditions management through exercise interventions and collaborative working with other industry professionals. |

### Guidance

Evidence to support grading decisions may include extended response essays or reports; individual and group presentations; infographics, leaflets or posters; pre-screening assessment and analysis; nutritional analysis and reporting; health and performance testing and assessment; individual training intervention plans; and self-reflective client evaluations.

There may also be an opportunity for research investigation, research proposals and research academic reports depending on the approach and subject area the learner chooses.

| Skill   | Achieved   | Achieved with Merit   | Achieved with Distinction   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Criterion 4: Develop and apply an evidence-based approach to planning and management of an exercise programme for a broad range of clients. | The candidate has developed a <b>basic</b> evidence-based approach to planning and management of an exercise programme for a broad range of clients. | The candidate has <b>more often than not</b> developed a <b>sound</b> evidence-based approach to planning and management of an exercise programme for a broad range of clients <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements.</b> | The candidate has developed an <b>extensive</b> evidence-based approach to planning and management of an exercise programme for a broad range of clients. |

### Guidance

Evidence to support grading decisions may include extended response essays or reports; individual and group presentations; pre-screening assessment and analysis; nutritional analysis and reporting; health and performance testing and assessment; individual training intervention plans; and self-reflective client evaluations.

Draft

| Skill  | Achieved  | Achieved with Merit  | Achieved with Distinction   |
|--|---|--|---|
| Criterion 5: Applying critical thinking and analysis to work autonomously within the physical activity and health sector or environment. | The candidate has demonstrated <b>basic</b> application of critical thinking and analysis to work autonomously within the physical activity and health sector or environment. | The candidate has <b>more often than not</b> demonstrated a <b>sound</b> application of critical thinking and analysis to work autonomously within the physical activity and health sector or environment <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements.</b> | The candidate has <b>consistently</b> demonstrated a <b>high</b> level of application of critical thinking and analysis to work autonomously within the physical activity and health sector or environment. |

## Guidance

Evidence to support grading decisions may include extended response essays or reports; individual and group presentations; infographics, leaflets or posters; training method planning; client motivation and applying behaviour change strategy; pre-screening assessment and analysis; nutritional analysis and reporting; health and performance testing and assessment; individual training intervention plans; and self-reflective client evaluations.

There may also be an opportunity for research investigation, research proposals and research academic reports depending on the approach and subject area the learner chooses.

| Skill  | Achieved  | Achieved with Merit  | Achieved with Distinction  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Criterion 6: Application of suitable exercise techniques or strategies to support and work with a client and/or clients with a broad range of managed, stable long-term health conditions. | The candidate has applied <b>basic</b> use of exercise techniques or strategies to support and work with a client and/or clients with a broad range of managed, stable long-term health conditions. | The candidate has <b>more often than not</b> applied <b>sound</b> use of exercise techniques or strategies to support and work with a client and/or clients with a broad range of managed, stable long-term health conditions. | The candidate has <b>consistently</b> applied a <b>high</b> level of application and analysis of exercise techniques or strategies to support and work with a client and/or clients with a broad range of managed, stable long-term health conditions. |

### Guidance

Evidence to support grading decisions may include training method planning; client motivation and applying behaviour change strategy; pre-screening assessment and analysis; nutritional analysis and reporting; health and performance testing and assessment; individual training intervention plans; and self-reflective client evaluations.

Draft

| Skill   | Achieved   | Achieved with Merit  | Achieved with Distinction  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Criterion 7: 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 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>basic</b> ability to effectively plan and manage their time to meet agreed key deadlines but has submitted work late 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.</p> | <p>The candidate has <b>more often than not</b> demonstrated a <b>sound</b> ability to effectively plan and manage their time to meet agreed key deadlines, <b>that has exceeded minimum requirements</b>, but may have submitted work late on one occasion.</p> <p>The candidate <b>has communicated effectively in a consistent manner</b> in relation to their attendance or timekeeping.</p> | <p>The candidate has demonstrated the <b>sound</b> ability to effectively plan and <b>confidently</b> manage their time. The candidate has <b>consistently</b> met key deadlines and <b>has not</b> submitted work late.</p> <p>The candidate <b>has communicated effectively in a consistent manner</b> in relation to their attendance or timekeeping.</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 8: 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 applied a <b>basic</b> range of professional behaviours and has worked well with clients, colleagues and peers to achieve an agreed aim.</p> | <p>The candidate has <b>more often than not confidently</b> applied a <b>broad</b> range of professional behaviours and has worked <b>effectively</b> with clients, colleagues and peers to achieve an agreed aim.</p> |  | <p>The candidate has <b>confidently</b> applied an <b>extensive</b> range of professional behaviours and has worked <b>very effectively</b> with clients, colleagues and peers to achieve an agreed aim.</p> |

## Guidance

Evidence to support grading decisions may include individual and group presentations; infographics, leaflets or posters; training method planning; pre-screening assessment and analysis; nutritional analysis and reporting; health and performance testing and assessment; individual training intervention plans; self-reflective client evaluations; meta-skills portfolio evidence; and Learning for Sustainability evidence.

## 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 qualification 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 is not 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 HND. For meaningful reflection to take place, the process of meta-skills development should happen continually throughout the HND. 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.

Draft

# 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](#).

Draft

# 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.

Draft

# Administrative information

---

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

---

## 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).