Optional assessment guidance

This guidance is **optional**. You can use this guidance or deliver and assess as outlined in the group award specification.

Group award title and code:	PDA in Laboratory Science (SCQF level 7) GM3G 47

The approach you take **must** meet the:

- full evidence requirements for graded units
- national standards

Changes to conditions of assessment and/or evidence requirements

Theory assessments

You can assess all units in the group award outcome-by-outcome. If you use a cut-off score for an examination-based assessment, the cut-off score must be 60% for each assessment. If you assess a single outcome using an examination-based assessment, the cut-off score must also be 60%.

You cannot remediate examination-based assessments. If a candidate does not pass, you must re-assess them using an alternative examination-based assessment.

If selected, you must assess the following units using closed-book assessments:

- Biochemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills (SCQF level 7) H922 34
- Cell Biology: Theory and Laboratory Skills (SCQF level 7) J2RE 34
- Mathematics for Science 1 (SCQF level 6) H8XP 33
- Physics for Life Sciences (SCQF level 7) J5RT 34
- Statistics for Science 1 (SCQF level 6) H8XT 33

If you want to use different approaches to assessment rather than a traditional closed-book examination, you can amend a maximum of **2** optional credits from closed-book to open-book assessment. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- case studies
- group discussions
- investigations
- presentations
- projects
- supervised assessments covering the application of knowledge and understanding and problem solving

If you are using open-book assessments, the following applies:

- You cannot amend any of the units listed above to open-book.
- For any supervised and timed open-book assessments, candidates are restricted to **one page** of summary notes for each outcome, and this must be in their own words.
- You must not use a traditional closed-book examination in open-book supervised conditions.
- The revised assessment task(s) must have the same level of demand as the original assessment.
- You cannot use questions from SQA's assessment support packs (ASPs) in open-book assessments.

Note: some open-book assessments used in previous sessions are no longer valid. You must ensure that all open-book assessments meet the criteria listed above.

Practical experiments

You can amend the practical requirements for the following unit:

- Thermodynamics and Kinetics: Theory and Laboratory Skills (SCQF level 8) H938 35
  - reduce to **one** practical experiment

If you are assessing a multistep practical experiment in the following units, you can amend the practical requirements, as shown:

- Organic Chemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills (SCQF level 7) H933 34
  - reduce to **one** multistep practical experiment
- Main Group Inorganic Chemistry (SCQF level 8) H932 35
  - reduce to **one** multistep practical experiment
- Aromatic Chemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills (SCQF level 8) H92N 35
  - reduce to **one** multistep practical experiment
- Base-Catalysed and Organometallic Chemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills (SCQF level 8) H92P 35
  - reduce to **one** multistep practical experiment

A multistep practical experiment must involve a minimum of **three** steps at SCQF level 7 and **four** steps at SCQF level 8. Examples of steps that could contribute towards a multistep practical experiment are:

- Synthesis (which itself could be more than one step) — providing the steps are substantive, for example preparation of a Grignard reagent followed by its reaction with a carbonyl compound could count as distinct steps
- Purification (for example by recrystallisation)
- Determination of melting point
- Running and analysing IR spectrum
- Thin layer chromatography of product

You can find more information on HNVQ delivery and assessment approaches on SQA's website.