

Route map through assessment

Course: Practical Electronics

Level: National 5

This document is intended to assist staff in planning and delivering the overall vision for Curriculum for Excellence.

The vision for the new national qualifications is to create assessment opportunities that follow and support learning and teaching. This follows the principles laid out in *Building the Curriculum 5* and makes assessment a natural part of learning and teaching.

This route map aims to signpost all of the relevant material that is available to support your subject. Your professional judgement is vital and the documents listed below are intended to support you in deciding the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and assess learners.

Education Scotland has produced a professional focus paper for practical electronics, and this is a good starting point as it provides support to help develop learning and teaching approaches that take forward the purposes and principles of Curriculum for Excellence through Practical Electronics National 5.

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/nationalqualifications/professionalfocuspapers/index.asp>

Practical Electronics National 5 course content

This is a new course replacing Applied Practical Electronics.

Skills, knowledge, and understanding will continue to be integrated but the unit titles are different: safe working practice, analysing, simulating, testing, evaluating solutions, basic test equipment skills, permanent and non-permanent methods of constructing simple circuits, systems approach, range of electronic components, combinational logic, electrical concepts (current, voltage, resistance, analogue/digital), impact of electronic systems on society and the environment.

The main SQA practical electronics page is found at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45654.html>, with pages specifically relating to National 5 at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47460.html>. Staff should also regularly check the updates and announcements section of this page.

The course specification can be found at

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseSpec_N5_Technologies_PracticalElectronics.pdf.

There are three units: Practical Electronics: Circuit Design, Practical Electronics: Circuit Simulation and Practical Electronics: Circuit Construction.

Practical Electronics: Circuit Design: Focuses on developing an understanding of key electrical concepts and electronic components.

Practical Electronics: Circuit Simulation: Focuses on using simulation software to assist in the design, construction and testing of circuits and systems, and investigating their behaviour.



Practical Electronics: Circuit Construction: Focuses on developing skills in practical wiring and assembly techniques, testing and fault finding, and assembling a range of electronic circuits using permanent and non-permanent methods.

To gain an award at National 5 learners must complete all units as well as the course assessment.

Course assessment

Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the course award. The course assessment is graded A–D. The grade is determined on the basis of the total mark for all course assessments together.

The Practical activity: Developing an electronic solution course assessment introduces challenge and application. The purpose of the practical activity is to assess learners' ability to apply electronic knowledge and skills to solve an appropriately challenging practical problem. Marks will be awarded for analysis and design, simulating a solution, construction using safe working practices, testing the solution and reporting on the solution.

Verification

The verification process is meant to be supportive and not onerous.

Internal verification is the process of ensuring standards are applied uniformly and consistently within a school in line with national standards. External verification is the process of ensuring that national standards are maintained consistently across all schools.

Quality assurance: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58448.html>.

Prior verification

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/Prior%20Verification%20Centre%20Guidance%20FINAL.pdf

Staff who devise their own assessments can send them to SQA for prior verification, free of charge. This is only necessary where significant changes have been made to the unit assessment provided. It gives departments confidence that their proposed assessment is fit for purpose and meets national standards.

Internal verification

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/InternalVerificationGuideforSQAcentres.pdf

As a matter of course staff should be quality assuring their assessments by carrying out activities that they have always done for NABs, for example double marking and blind marking. A sample of learners' work should be marked by more than one staff member in a department, and in single-person departments an arrangement should be made with another local authority school.

External verification

In practical electronics schools will submit a sample of learners' evidence for scrutiny by subject-specialist qualification verifiers. SQA intend that every school will be verified over the first few years. Verification will take place in November, February and May. Twelve samples will be asked for.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Evidence_required_for_verificationevents.pdf



Schools must retain the evidence until 31 July of each academic year.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/SQA_Evidence_retention_requirements_A3_table.pdf

Key messages from verification will be put up on the SQA website.

Recognising positive achievement

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/Recognising_Positive_Achievement_N4N5.pdf

This is only applicable to National 5, **not** Higher. A learner who achieves 'No Award' in a National 5 course assessment will be able to gain a National 4 course award as long as he/she has passed all the internally assessed units of the National 5 course **and** has passed the National 4 Added Value Unit.

Results services

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/FA6669_SQA_Results_Services_A5_8pp_brochure_web.pdf

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/65427.html>

There are no longer any appeals. SQA offers two services: (1) Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (within ten days of sitting external assessment) and (2) Post Results Service. The latter consists of either a clerical check or a marking review. It is likely that these will be carried out in conjunction with the school SQA co-ordinator.

Education Scotland support materials

Advice and support for new national qualifications (Glow password required):

[Practical Electronics - Circuit Diagram - Combinational Logic \(N5\)](#)

[Skills in Practice](#)

Other useful websites

A quick guide to finding vital information about Curriculum for Excellence:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/keycfesupport/index.asp>

This appears under three headings:

- the latest guidance, updates and plans for embedding Curriculum for Excellence
- information on assessment
- information on the new qualifications.

The BBC has pulled together all its learning content in a new Knowledge and Learning Beta site that includes Class Clips:

www.bbc.co.uk/education