

Route map through assessment

Course: Economics

Level: National 5

This document is intended to assist teachers 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 candidates.

Education Scotland has produced a professional focus paper for economics, 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 Economics National 5.

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/nq/e/nqresource_tcm4745497.asp

Economics National 5 course content

The main SQA economics page is found at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45695.html>, with pages specifically related to National 5 at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47437.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_SocialStudies_Economics.pdf.

There are three units: Economics of the Market, UK Economic Activity and Global Economic Activity.

Economics of the Market: Explores how the basic economic problem of unlimited wants in relation to limited resources affects the daily choices made by us all, personal economic decisions, and how supply and demand can drive resource allocation in a market economy. This unit will provide learners with a growing knowledge and understanding of how markets operate.

UK Economic Activity: Government taxation revenue and government spending, UK government policy objectives, including inflation, employment and economic growth, and the role of Scotland in the UK economy. This unit allows learners to consider the impact of government action on economic issues and problems.

Global Economic Activity: Global nature of economics, nature and purpose of global trade between the UK, the EU and other countries, including the effect of currency fluctuations and the role of aid to developing economies. This unit will provide learners with a growing knowledge and understanding of global economics and its social impact.



More detail on course coverage can be found in the course support notes.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseUnitSupportNotes_N5_SocialStudies_Economics.pdf

Further mandatory information on course coverage is found on pages 8 and 9 of the course assessment specification. This breaks each unit down into sections and topics.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseAssessSpec_N5_SocialStudies_Economics.pdf

A course comparison from National 3 to National 5 is also available.

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

Course assessment

At National 5 added value will be assessed in a course assessment, which consists of a question paper and an assignment. The course will be graded A–D.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseAssessSpec_N5_SocialStudies_Economics.pdf

Question paper

There will be a 1 hour, 30 minutes question paper for Economics National 5 worth 70 marks, which will be carried out under exam conditions and marked by SQA.

Section one will have 30 marks and will consist of a number of short answer questions based on two pieces of stimulus material. The questions will be sampled from the full range of the mandatory course coverage. This section will mainly assess handling information, evaluation and application of knowledge and understanding. In this section learners can be asked to describe economic situations and/or trends by referring to the stimulus material. Learners can also be asked to identify a group of people that the economic situation and/or trend may affect and explain the effects. The stimulus material could be in the form of a graph, diagram or text. The questions will mostly relate to the stimulus, although some questions may be based on the mandatory topics surrounding the stimulus material.

Section two will have 40 marks and will consist of extended response questions sampled from the full range of mandatory course coverage. In this section there are four 10-mark questions. These questions will be broken into sub-questions. Learners could be asked to describe economic concepts or decisions and outline their impact or explain their causes. Learners may also be asked to draw economic graphs to support their answers.

Specimen question paper and marking scheme: http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/EconomicsSQPN5.pdf.

Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to address challenge and application by applying skills, knowledge and understanding from across the course. It is worth 30 marks. The economic topics/issues will be provided by SQA.

There are two stages to completing the assignment.

- Researching sources of information relating to the chosen topic, selecting the appropriate information to use from these sources and analysing the information in preparation for the second stage. This can take up to 4 hours.
- Producing a report based on the evidence of the research findings using given headings. This can take no more than 1 hour.

Marks for the report will be awarded as follows:

Introduction — 4 marks

Research sources — 6 marks

Viewpoints — 4 marks

Analysis and interpretation — 8 marks

Conclusion — 4 marks

Economic theory — 4 marks

The assignment will be conducted under some degree of supervision and control to ensure that the work presented is the learner's own. The assignment will require learners to apply their research and analytical skills within the context of an economics topic or issue.

Staff should refer to the general assessment information, which contains further detailed information on the setting and marking of the assignment.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/GAInfoNational5Economics.pdf

Unit assessment

Units are mandatory when taken as part of the Economics National 5 course but they can be taken independently. Unit support notes follow on from the course support notes.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseUnitSupportNotes_N5_SocialStudies_Economics.pdf

Each individual unit also has a National 5 unit specification.

Each unit specification gives details of the outcomes and assessment standards. There are **three** outcomes per unit.

Economics of the Market

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_N5_Economics_EconomicsoftheMarket.pdf

UK Economic Activity

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_N5_Economics_UKEconomicActivity.pdf

Global Economic Activity

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_N5_Economics_GlobalEconomicActivity.pdf

Learners must meet all the outcomes and assessment standards, and staff should read the documentation carefully. Evidence should be generated through learning and teaching. Assessment evidence can be drawn from a variety of activities and presented in a variety of formats. All of the evidence does not have to be generated from one activity but can be from several tasks and assessments carried out throughout the course. Learners should have access to resources to complete the assessment task and no time restrictions should be imposed. Staff should use their professional judgment when looking at the assessment evidence and ensure that minimum competency is met. They should undertake quality assurance regularly.

Three different ways of gathering evidence have been suggested by SQA. The most traditional approach is unit by unit. A combined approach links knowledge and understanding from two units together. Many staff will move towards the portfolio approach as their confidence grows. Here evidence is gathered from everyday learning using key classroom tasks. Unit assessment support is kept on the SQA Secure website.

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

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/66843.html>

In economics schools will submit a sample of learners' evidence for scrutiny by subject-specialist qualification verifiers. SQA intends 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 session.

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. The first of these can be found at

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/Economics_VKM_Round_1.pdf.

Recognising positive achievement

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

This is not applicable as there is no National 4 award available in economics.

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):

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/nqcoursematerials/subjects/economics/coursematerials.asp>

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/nqcoursematerials/subjects/economics/learningandteaching.asp>

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 have pulled together all their learning content in a new Knowledge and Learning Beta site that includes Class Clips:

www.bbc.co.uk/education