

Route map through assessment

Course: Geography

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 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 National 5 Geography.

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/nq/g/nqresource_tcm4741307.asp

Geography National 5 course content

The main SQA geography page is found at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45627.html>. Pages specifically relating to National 5 are at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47446.html>. Staff should also regularly check the updates and announcements section of this page.

The course specification can be found at

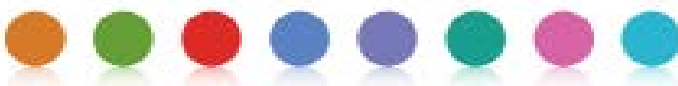
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseSpec_N5_SocialStudies_Geography.pdf.

There are three units: Physical Environments, Human Environments and Global Issues.

Physical Environments key topics: location of landscape type, formation of key landscape features, land-use management and sustainability, weather. Landscapes from contexts within Scotland and/or the UK: either glaciated uplands and coastal landscapes **or** upland limestone and rivers and their valleys.

Human Environments key topics: contrasts in development, world population distribution and change, issues in changing urban and rural landscapes. Learners will study and compare developed and developing countries drawn from a global context.

Geography: Global Issues key topics: climate change, the impact of human activity on the natural environment, environmental hazards, trade and globalisation, tourism, health. Learners will study major global issues and the strategies adopted to manage these. **Two** topics must be studied for the course assessment.



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

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseUnitSupportNotes_N5_SocialStudies_Geography.pdf

Further mandatory information on course coverage is found on page 8 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_Geography.pdf

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

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Geography_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_Geography.pdf

Question paper

There will be a 1½ hour question paper for Geography National 5 worth 60 marks, which will be carried out under exam conditions and marked by SQA. It will test knowledge, understanding and skills with greater emphasis on knowledge and understanding. There will be three sections: Physical Environment (20 marks, with a choice of landscape types), Human Environment (20 marks, all questions must be answered) and Global Issues (2 × 10 marks, one question on each chosen topic).

A specimen question paper and marking scheme can be found at

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/GeographySQPN5.pdf.

Assignment

The assignment is a new component of the course assessment. Learners will have a free choice of topic or issue. Fieldwork is to be encouraged but is not compulsory. It is understood that due to restrictions on taking learners out of the classroom there may be a common core of assignments. Research will be undertaken in the classroom and at home. This supplementary information will be different for each learner, as will their processing and analysing of the data collected. SQA will provide a brief and set a submission date. Staff are expected to conduct the assignment under a high level of supervision and control. Learners will be permitted to take two sides of A4 paper containing data into the assessment which should be submitted with the assignment. No marks will be given for the processed data but learners must make reference to it otherwise they will not be able to achieve full marks. A structured template is available for the production of evidence. Learners will be given one hour to write their report. It will be externally marked by SQA out of 20 marks. A greater emphasis will be placed on skills.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/GAInfoNational5Geography.pdf

Unit assessment

Units are mandatory when taken as part of the Geography 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_Geography.pdf

Each individual unit also has a National 5 unit specification.

Each unit specification gives details of the outcomes and assessment standards. There are **two** outcomes per unit: one based on skills and one based on knowledge and understanding.

Physical Environments

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_N5_Geography_PhysicalEnvironments.pdf

Human Environments

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_N5_Geography_HumanEnvironments.pdf

Global Issues

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_N5_Geography_GlobalIssues.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 designed 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 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

www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/66846.html

In geography 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 in 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 offer 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/geography/coursematerials.asp>

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/nqcoursematerials/subjects/geography/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

The Bitesize websites have also been updated for National 5:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/znbw2hv>