

National 4 Biology assessment overview (June 2012)

Key points

SQA is currently developing Unit and Course assessment support and this document outlines what SQA will produce for the National 4 Biology Course.

- ♦ Unit assessment support — three exemplar support packages, which meet the requirements of the Unit Specifications. Each package will exemplify a different approach to assessment and gathering evidence. Evidence for the achievement of Outcome 1 in one Unit may be used as evidence of the achievement of Outcome 1 for other Units in this Course. Centres will be free to develop their own assessment packages.
- ♦ A specimen assignment and marking instructions, which meet the requirements of the Assignment (Added Value) Unit.

Unit assessment support

This section should be read in conjunction with the [National 4 Biology Unit Specifications](#).

The resources can be used in a number of ways, appropriate to the needs of the learner. These packages will show how to generate evidence and make assessment judgements. Each package will provide complete coverage of the requirements of the Units of the Course.

Package 1: Unit by Unit assessment (31 October 2012)

Unit-by-Unit assessment support will be provided in the form of an experiment/practical investigation and a report for Outcome 1, and an investigation report and bank of questions for Outcome 2.

Package 2: Unit by Unit assessment — alternative forms of evidence (28 Feb 2013)

Unit-by-Unit assessment support will be provided in the form of an investigation covering Outcome 1 and some of Outcome 2. Other assessment approaches will indicate how the remaining Assessment Standards for Outcome 2 can be overtaken.

Package 3: Portfolio (30 April 2013)

A portfolio assessment support will be provided, showing how centres could use naturally occurring evidence to build up an Outcome-based portfolio of learners' work that meets the requirement of the Outcomes of the Units in the Course.

Added Value Unit: Assignment (Publication by 30 April 2013)

This should be read in conjunction with the [National 4 Biology Assignment \(Added Value\) Unit Specification](#).

The assessment method for this Unit will be an assignment. Learners will carry out a research investigation in which they will draw on and apply knowledge and skills they have learned during the Course. Learners will investigate a topical issue in biology selected from *Cell Biology*, *Biology: Multicellular Organisms* or *Biology: Life On Earth* key areas.

Learners will use a variety of approaches and consider applications of biology and the impact on society/the environment. The investigation stage should be covered within approximately 8 hours of class time.

They will communicate information related to their method used or their record of process and findings which will allow demonstration of scientific literacy skills. This should take no longer than 2 hours. The assessment will need to contain opportunities required to cover all the assessment standards in a single assignment. The assignment will be set by centres within the following guidelines:

- ◆ Learners will select and investigate a topical issue from a key area of this Course.
- ◆ The topical issue could have either a positive or negative impact on society/ the environment. This could be from an unfamiliar context or from a familiar context investigated in greater depth, or from integrating aspects of one or more Units.

The assignment topic will be agreed between the learner and the teacher/lecturer.