

your coursework



What you
need to know



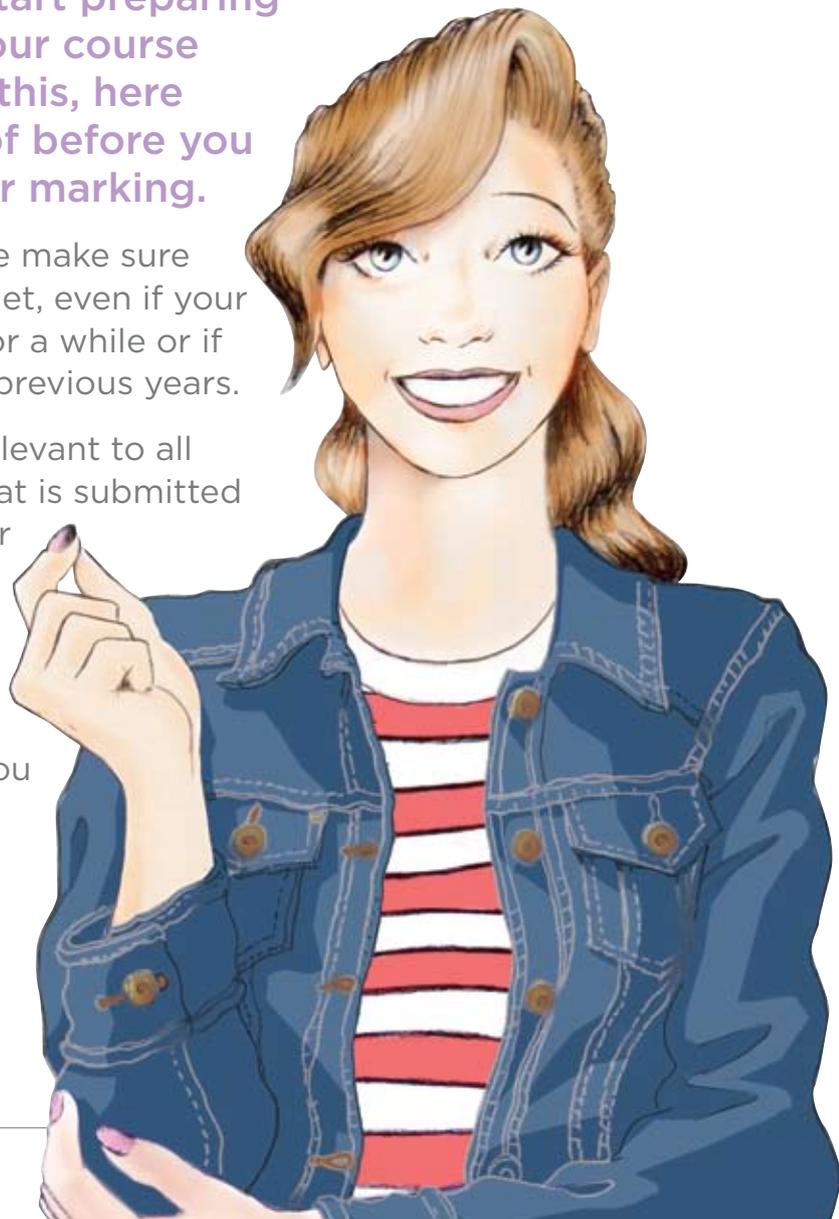
Hi, I'm SAM, and I'm here to help you understand the **dos** and **don'ts** of coursework...

On most SQA courses, you start preparing for coursework as soon as your course begins. To support you with this, here are a few rules to be aware of before you start to produce materials for marking.

These rules are important, so please make sure you read and understand this booklet, even if your coursework will not be handed in for a while or if you have submitted coursework in previous years.

The information in this booklet is relevant to all coursework, not just coursework that is submitted to SQA for marking. Your teacher or lecturer will be able to advise you of the penalties that could be applied if you do not follow these rules.

If you are unclear on anything, or you want to find out more, have a word with your teacher or lecturer.



Guidance

Your coursework will depend on which course you're studying. It could be, for example, a project, a portfolio or an assignment. Whatever shape your work takes, it's your chance to show you know your subject and to gain marks that could make a big difference to your final grade.

You may be able to use many different sources to support your work, including books, TV, radio and the internet. They're the building blocks for your coursework and using them is a great way to learn.

However, you can't just copy from other sources and include something as if it was your own work (this is called 'passing off'). It's vital to show clearly what work you did and what is being quoted from another source.

Each piece of coursework you complete will have different requirements. Your teacher or lecturer will be able to tell you the specific requirements for each piece of coursework you are completing.

Resource sheets

Some coursework assessments are completed under controlled conditions and allow you to use a resource sheet. Resource sheets are sometimes also known as research evidence or processed information. You must familiarise yourself with the rules on how to use and submit these. Failure to follow the rules could mean losing marks and, in some subjects, not being credited with marks for your coursework assessment. Speak to your teacher or lecturer to find out what you need to know about using and submitting resource sheets.

General assessment information

General assessment information is available for all National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses that include coursework as part of the course assessment. This information gives an overview of the coursework task that you will do and outlines what is required. It includes information on how the task will be carried out, the work to be submitted, who will mark it, and the general marking instructions that will be used.

This information is available from the subject pages on SQA's website, under 'Coursework information'. You can access the subject pages from www.sqa.org.uk/nq

These rules are here to help you:

1. Deadlines

Get your work in on time

Deadlines will be set by your teacher or lecturer for drafts (where permitted) or final submissions, and it's up to you to ensure you meet them. The best way to do this is not to wait until the deadline day to submit your work.

Depending on the type of coursework you're doing, you should show it to your teacher or lecturer as you're going along so that they can help you address any issues as they come up, and you can get everything ready on time. Speak to your teacher or lecturer to find out the kinds of support they can offer you.

Don't panic if you are struggling to meet a deadline. Talk to your teacher or lecturer to see what can be done to help.

2. Word count

Don't go over the word count

If your coursework states a maximum word count, you must always adhere to this requirement.

3. Sources

Acknowledge them all

You **MUST** acknowledge all material from sources like books, TV and the internet. Your teacher or lecturer can tell you how it's done, but here are a few pointers:

- Use **“quotation marks”** around any text that has come from other sources and identify clearly what those sources are.
- Think about any diagrams or illustrations you've used — their sources need to be referenced too.
- Create a bibliography (a list of references) if you need one — it goes at the end of your work.



4. Plagiarism

Don't pretend other people's work is yours

Passing off other people's work and ideas as your own is called **plagiarism**, and it's cheating. If you don't acknowledge sources in your coursework, that counts as plagiarism too.

It's not your own work if:

- **all or some of it has been worked on by someone else**
- **it's been done by another candidate, a brother, sister, friend, or anyone who's produced similar coursework in the past**
- **it's example work that's been prepared by your teacher or lecturer**
- **you've copied it from a book, an internet site or an essay bank**

Markers can easily spot plagiarism.

5. Do it yourself

Unless it's group work

Collusion means working with others when you should be working alone. It applies to giving help, getting help, and sharing passwords, files and paperwork.

Everyone involved in collusion is breaking the rules — not just the person who has asked for help. If another candidate asks you for help, you should suggest that they speak to the teacher or lecturer.

If you are working as part of a group (eg on a group project), you must make sure that all the work you submit is your own.

If you are having difficulty with your coursework, the very best advice comes directly from teachers and lecturers.

6. Language

No offensive words or images

Everyone submitting coursework is expected to show respect to other candidates, teachers, lecturers, markers and SQA. Don't include rude, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or images in or on your work. It's not acceptable that markers should have to consider them.

Remember that markers always make sure offensive submissions are investigated.

7. Check and double-check

Look at your work before submitting

Before you hand in your coursework, check that:

- **everything is your own work, and sources are properly acknowledged**
 - **any work from previous years that you are submitting meets the rules too**
 - **there is no offensive language or imagery**
 - **you have completed your coursework in accordance with your teacher's or lecturer's instructions, and SQA's requirements**
-

Don't risk it

Spotting plagiarism and collusion isn't difficult

- **Teachers and lecturers regularly read drafts and can spot changes in writing style and use of language.**
- **Markers know their subject inside out so they're familiar with lots of sources.**
- **SQA uses software that identifies plagiarism and collusion. This software matches copied phrases and text with the sources they've been taken from.**

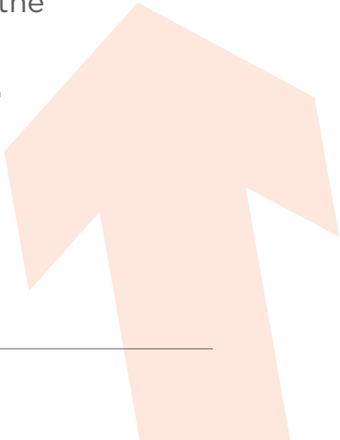
Penalty

What if you break the rules?

Breaching SQA's rules can have serious consequences. If an investigation shows you've broken the rules, the level of the penalty will depend on the severity of the matter. SQA will decide which penalty is appropriate. Depending on the nature of the breach, the range of penalties includes:

- **Your marks can be reduced – or you can be awarded zero marks.**
- **Your qualification for the subject concerned can be cancelled.**
- **All of your qualifications for the entire year can be cancelled.**

Stick to the rules and do the right thing every step of the way.



Declaration

Read it and understand it

Your school or college will give you a declaration that you have to sign before they submit your coursework to SQA for marking. It's really important that you understand the wording of the declaration, so have a good read of it now:

I confirm that:

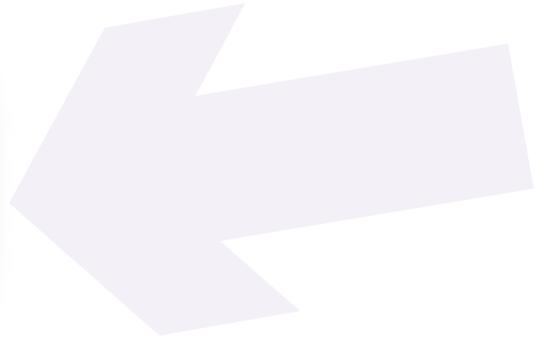
- I have read SQA's *Your Coursework* booklet and I understand its contents
- I understand that SQA may impose penalties on candidate awards where the rules in the *Your Coursework* booklet have not been followed
- the coursework submitted with this declaration is all my own work with all sources of information clearly identified and acknowledged
- I understand that this coursework will be submitted to SQA for marking

Remember:

- You need to sign the declaration before your work is submitted to SQA for marking.
- Be sure you understand the declaration before you sign it. Ask your teacher or lecturer for help if you're unsure about anything.



And finally...



Remember that everyone wants to see you do well. Speaking to others about your work and sharing their experience can be really helpful when researching your topics – just make sure the work you submit for marking is your own.

So, enjoy your courses and if you have any questions please ask your teachers or lecturers for advice. They are there to help you.

