



**HIGH
SCHOOL
OF DUNDEE**



2026

F3/4 Curriculum

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Introduction

During their first two years of secondary school, pupils have been introduced to several subjects which they have not studied before. In Forms 1 and 2, all the subjects studied are determined by the School (except for a preference of Latin, German, Mandarin, or Spanish in Form 2) but from Form 3 onwards pupils have the responsibility of choosing the majority of the subjects that make up their curriculum.

The purpose of this booklet is to give pupils and parents some guidance on how to make the best choice for them, and on where to seek advice if they are unsure what to do. Detailed information on each of the certificate subjects is given later in this booklet.

Please note - the School reserves the right to not run an individual course if the number of pupils selecting the subject in any given year does not justify it.

National 5 Qualifications

All pupils will undertake national qualifications at **National 5** level.

The Form 3 and Form 4 timetable provides all pupils with the option to study eight subjects which lead to national qualifications offered by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) at National 5 level. In addition, all pupils will study Religious, Moral, and Philosophical Studies.

There may be exceptions whereby a pupil is unable to access a course at National 5 level, and in some cases it will be possible to be presented at National 4 level. Arrangements will be made after communication between school and home in these circumstances.

All courses in this booklet are offered at National 5 and are studied over two school years. Pupils are expected to continue courses to their conclusion, and **no provision is available in Form 3 or Form 4 for supervised or supported study.**

Most courses at National 5 include a final examination, held in April / May / June of Form 4. The majority of courses also include a coursework assessment that is completed in school, under exam-style conditions, and marked externally by the SQA. Marks from the final exam and the coursework assessment are combined to determine an overall grade for the course. The grades awarded, from A to D, are confirmed in certificates posted to candidates in August following the exams, with **grades A to C denoting a course pass.**

Coursework assessment of the new qualifications may include a combination of practical work, case studies, investigations, and projects. The coursework assessment, just like the final exam, is a formal element of the course and must be a pupil's own work. The precise requirements of these assessments differ by subject. Pupils will be made aware of specific requirements with clear guidance on the support available, in advance of commencing the coursework assessment in each subject.

All of the Form 4 courses are designed to prepare pupils for their choice of Higher courses in Form 5 and the possibility of undertaking Advanced Highers in Form 6.

Subject Preferences for Form 3

Why must a choice be made?

It may be that pupils are enjoying and doing well in all of their subjects; nevertheless there is not time in the school day to continue the study of every one of them to the required depth.

Is this choice important?

Whatever subjects are chosen, pupils will have to study these subjects for at least two years (and the majority of them for at least three years). The subjects in which pupils will sit Highers in Form 5, and continue to Advanced Higher in Form 6, will in almost all cases be chosen from these subjects – and it is upon the results in Form 5 and Form 6 examinations that their options beyond school will depend.

Considering future courses and careers

The great majority of our pupils enter tertiary education on leaving school. Entry to university, college, and the workplace is dependent on obtaining the number and quality of Higher passes required for each option. Entrance requirements vary considerably, and the popular courses and universities typically have higher requirements. Many courses require a pass in a particular subject or type of subject, e.g. any science.

In choosing a possible career, pupils must pay attention to their academic strengths and weaknesses. For example, if a pupil is relatively poor in the sciences, perhaps a career in healthcare is not for them. So academic ability should be considered as well as the prospect of several years of work in any given discipline.

Any pupil who may be considering a career in Dentistry, Medicine or Veterinary Medicine is most strongly advised to study all three sciences during Forms 3 and 4.

What is a balanced curriculum?

The balanced curriculum is one which draws from the following modes:

- Language, literacy, and communication
- Mathematics and numeracy
- Science
- Technologies
- Social studies
- Creative and aesthetic activities

So long as pupils follow a **balanced** curriculum, they will not disqualify themselves from many individual courses. It is worth bearing in mind that currently over half of the careers which require a degree are open to graduates in any discipline.

Does that mean the pupil has to have a career in mind now?

Absolutely not! Many pupils at the Form 2 stage have only a vague idea of what they wish to do after leaving school – and some of those who think that they know, may change their minds – many more than once – before the time comes to leave.

How do pupils decide which subjects to study?

There is no single correct answer to this question. What is right for one pupil may be inappropriate for another. In the first instance, in order to ensure a core set of skills and a balanced curriculum for all pupils, the following advice should be followed. Any changes to this model should be discussed with the pupil's PCS Teacher.

- English and Mathematics are compulsory in Forms 3 and 4
- It is **recommended** that all pupils will study **at least one Science** (Biology, Chemistry, or Physics)
- It is **recommended** that all pupils will study **at least one language other than English** (French, German, Latin, Mandarin, or Spanish)
- All pupils will take Games and RMPS and will also have one period per week of Personal, Social, and Health Education (PSHE)
- Thereafter, pupils may exercise freedom of choice.

To determine the remaining preferences, pupils can ask themselves three questions:

In which subjects am I doing well?

Whether a subject is found enjoyable or not, if a pupil finds it very difficult or is advised that the prospects of satisfactory progress are poor, then it is likely that they should not pursue the subject. This advice is particularly apt if, as a consequence of choosing that subject, another subject might be dropped in which good progress would be more likely.

Which subjects are likely to help in my future career?

The importance of this question depends on the extent to which a potential future career, or perhaps a selection of possibilities, has been mapped out. In the absence of a well-defined career path then it is much more important to ensure that pupils maintain a **balanced curriculum** through Forms 3 and 4, and beyond.

Which subjects do I like?

Pupils usually do better in subjects in which they have a real interest. The more a subject is studied, the more important this becomes. It may be argued that it is difficult to study a subject at university if one does not care for it. Also, if pupils can find a balanced curriculum from subjects which they enjoy, they will find their school education as a whole a more interesting and exciting experience.

Pupil happiness and wellbeing is also at the heart of what drives the School's wider goals, and the benefits of following one's passions and interests should not be underestimated when deciding on subject preferences.

Further advice

Each pupil has received information on subject preferences during PSHE classes in Form 2 and further advice is also available from a variety of sources:

In school

- General advice on subject preference should be sought in the first instance from the pupil's Pastoral Care & Support Teacher, who can advise on the balance of subjects.
- Subject teachers (and, if necessary, the Heads of Department) will be able to give guidance, for their own subjects, on a pupil's future prospects.
- Advice on future careers is available from Mr Downie, and the wider PCS Team. Useful information may also be obtained from the Careers notice boards.
- A very comprehensive Careers Library is located in the School's Library in Trinity. The Careers Library holds information on specific careers, employment opportunities and training and education requirements and is open to pupils from 8.30am until 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and from 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday. Pupils may visit the library before or after school or at break times.
- Senior members of staff are also available for advice, including Mr Smith for specific help with university entrance requirements.
- By Form 4 all pupils will have taken career aptitude tests using Unifrog and will be given the opportunity to independent careers advice from The Careers Place, including a one-to-one interview and feedback. They will also be given a considerable amount of information on careers in general.

Outwith school

Parents, other relations, or friends of the family may be engaged in the kind of work in which pupils may be interested.

While it is the case that advice is very important and pupils should make every effort to get all the advice they can, in the end it is the **individual pupil's career** and **their choice**.

Pupils, and indeed parents, should beware of advice which may be based on the adviser's dislike of a particular subject (just because one person disliked a subject does not mean that another will) or on out-of-date information (university entrance qualifications have changed significantly since a pupil's grandparent attended).

Negative advice, from whatever source, of the type that 'X is a useless subject' or 'Y is a waste of time' is almost always unhelpful and should, at best, be treated with great suspicion.

Subject Preference Timeline

October	<p>Subject preference / careers programme begins in PSHE classes</p> <p>Pupils start being introduced to courses not studied in Forms 1 and 2 (i.e. Business Management, Economics, High Performance Sport, Modern Studies, and Physical Education).</p>
November	<p>Next Steps Parents' Information Evening</p> <p>Interim reports published</p>
December	<p>Subject Preference information</p> <p>This Form 3 curriculum booklet is available on Firefly.</p>
January	<p>Monday 26 January: Form 2 Virtual Parents' Evening, when parents will have the chance to discuss their son/daughter's progress and potential with subject teachers.</p> <p>During January all pupils will have a subject preference interview with their PCS teacher. During this meeting pupils will indicate provisional subject preferences. A copy of these preferences will be sent to parents for information, and to allow for changes to be discussed and actioned.</p>
February	<p>The last date for changes to subject preferences previously indicated by pupils will be Friday 6 February.</p>

General Notes for Forms 3 and 4

Reporting

Progress reports on the attainment of pupils in Forms 3 and 4 are issued regularly.

In Form 4, Parents' Evenings and reports are currently scheduled ahead of the prelim diet, and then after the prelims in advance of Form 5 Subject Preferences.

Homework

Homework and preparation are even more important than in the earlier years. The precise amount will depend on the ability of the individual pupil and the subjects chosen, but families should be guided by the School's Homework Policy, which suggests **up to 8 hours per week in Form 3** and **12 hours per week in Form 4**.

Regular revision of notes and work covered in class, in addition to completing set homework, is essential throughout both years of the course, and a valuable work ethic to develop in preparation for study in Form 5 and beyond.

Co-curricular activities

As in earlier years, it is the view of the School that pupils will gain significantly by participating as widely as possible in the activities organised by the School outwith the classroom.

Pupils are expected to fulfil their obligations in sporting fixtures and are advised to participate as widely as possible in the various cultural and social activities which take place in the School. It will be very much to pupils' benefit if they can use their leisure time outside School in a similarly constructive fashion.

Pupils' participation and achievement in activities, both school-based and outside, will be used in references, including those for university entrance, and are often viewed in a very positive light both by universities and prospective employers.

In addition, maintaining a healthy body, and engaging in a variety of physical and social activities is important for both the physical and mental health of all pupils.

Pupils should not underestimate the importance of co-curricular activities.

Instrumental music

Tuition in instrumental music is offered on the basis of rota extraction, based on one 30-minute lesson on one or possibly two days per week. Any additional lessons can only be timetabled outwith normal classes where time permits.

If the number of pupils applying for instrumental lessons exceeds availability, the following priorities will apply:

1. Pupils with an SQA requirement in practical Music
2. Pupils from Form 6 down to Form 3 who are currently receiving tuition.

Form 3 and Form 4 Curriculum

Forms 3 and 4 pupils take eight main certificate subjects, chosen from those on the following pages.

Learning Skills

The support of the Learning Skills department continues to be on offer to pupils in Forms 3 and 4.

This decision will have been discussed with parents, pupils, and PCS in advance of the subject preference process for Form 2 pupils already receiving support.

Mrs J Downie (Head of Department) will also coordinate any specific support which a pupil *may* require in national examinations in consultation with the SQA.

Art and Design

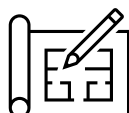
N5

Head of Art: **Mr A Kerr**



Topics

- Expressive Portfolio: Produce a series of still life drawings and paintings (3 x A2 boards).
- Design Portfolio: Work through the design process to create a 3D piece of body adornment (present work for external assessment on 3 x A2 boards).
- Written Exam preparation: learning how to analyse art and design pieces.



Skills

- Through the Expressive Portfolio, students develop strong observational, technical, and compositional skills, using tone, colour, and perspective to create personalised still life drawings and paintings.
- The Design Portfolio fosters creativity and excellent problem-solving skills, by working through the design process, encouraging experimentation, 3D construction, and effective presentation of a wearable body adornment.
- Preparation for the Written Exam builds understanding of critical analysis, art and design vocabulary, contextual awareness, and extended writing skills, enabling students to evaluate artworks and design pieces with depth and clarity.



Opportunities

- Art and Design plays a crucial role in shaping the visual world around us, from the products we use and the media we consume to the buildings, environments and cultural experiences we encounter. Creative industries are rapidly expanding, with increasing demand for innovative thinkers who can combine artistic skill with digital fluency and problem-solving. Art and Design provides a strong foundation for a wide range of career paths, including fine art, animation, illustration, product and fashion design, architecture, game design, jewellery and textiles, film and television production.



Question Paper

1 hour 20 minutes Written Exam.
40 marks (scaled to 50).
Critically analyse expressive and design works through detailed, extended written responses.

Assignment

Two practical portfolios (expressive and design) completed in class, externally marked by the SQA (100 marks each portfolio).



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Art and Design:
[National 5 Art and Design - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)
HSD Firefly: [Resources](#) > [Art](#) > [National 5](#)

Prerequisites Completion of Form 1/2 Art and Design, or equivalent.

Head of Biology: **Mr R Bunting**



Topics

- Cell Biology: Cell structure, transport across membranes, DNA and the production of proteins, proteins, genetic engineering and respiration
- Multicellular Organisms: Producing new cells, control and communication, reproduction, variation and inheritance, transport in plants and animals and absorption of materials
- Life on Earth: Ecosystems, distribution of organisms, photosynthesis, energy in ecosystems, food production and evolution of species.



Skills

- To think analytically, creatively, independently, and to make reasoned evaluations.
- To apply critical thinking in new and unfamiliar contexts to solve problems
- Evaluate biological issues, assess risk, and make informed decisions to become scientifically literate citizens, able to review the science-based claims they meet
- To develop communication and collaborative skills
- To plan experiments to collect, process and present data in a variety of formats



Opportunities

Biology helps us to understand ourselves in an interdependent world where living sustainably is vital. Studying biology opens *many* opportunities because it sits at the centre of health, environment, and technology. Biology is offered at Higher and Advanced Higher Levels. It underpins a variety of academic courses and careers:

- Medical Sciences: Human biology, disease, public health, and medical science
- Biotechnology: Molecular biology, genetics, microbiology, and bio-innovation
- Environmental & Ecological Sciences: Ecosystems, biodiversity, conservation, animal behaviour, evolution, marine biology and climate-related biology
- Applied & Industrial Biology: Agriculture, food science, biomanufacturing, pharma, and bioinformatics



Question Paper

2 hours 30 minutes

Section 1: multiple choice (25 marks)

Section 2: extended response (75 marks)

Assignment

8 hours, including 1 hour 30 minutes for report stage (20 marks, scaled to 25)



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Biology:

[National 5 Biology - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)

[HSD Firefly: Resources > Biology > National 5](#)

Prerequisites Completion of Form 1/2 Biology, or equivalent.

Business Management



Head of Business Education: **Mr N Higgins**



Topics

- Understanding Business – Learn what businesses are, why they exist, and how they operate. Explore private, public and third sector businesses. Understand how external and internal factors impact on a business.
- Management of Marketing – Discover the different types of market research businesses use and the element of an effective marketing mix.
- Management of Operations – Explore how businesses produce goods and services efficiently and the importance of ethical and environmental production methods.
- Management of People – Understand how businesses recruit, select, train and motivate their employees.
- Management of Finance – Learn about the importance of managing cash flow, the different types of finance available to business and the key elements of an income statement.



Skills

- Analytical Thinking – You will look at the advantages and disadvantages of different business decisions.
- Problem-Solving & Critical Thinking – You will look at real world business problems and give recommendations.
- Numeracy – Work confidently with costs, revenue and profits.
- Communication – Present ideas clearly in reports and discussions.



Opportunities

Business opens doors to exciting careers and respected degrees – everyone works for a business. Popular paths include:

- ✓ Marketing
- ✓ Accountancy
- ✓ Human Resources
- ✓ Logistics/Operations
- ✓ Business Analyst and Consultancy
- ✓ Banking and Finance



Question Paper

2 hours

Section 1: contextual questions (40 marks)

Section 2: applied knowledge (50 marks)

Assignment

5 hours under supervision (30 marks)



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Business Management:

[National 5 Business Management - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)

[HSD Firefly: Resources > Business Education > National 5 Business Management](#)

Prerequisites n/a

Chemistry

N5

Head of Subject: **Dr N Kiernan**



Topics:

- Chemistry is the study of submicroscopic matter, which constitutes the building blocks of all life and materials around us. The aim of the Chemistry course from Form 3 onwards is to develop pupils' curiosity of the natural and physical world around them through the following core topics:
- Chemical Changes and Structure: rates of reaction, atomic structure and bonding related to properties of materials, formulae and reacting quantities, acids and bases.
- Nature's Chemistry: homologous series, everyday consumer products, energy from fuels.
- Chemistry in Society: metals, plastics, fertilisers, nuclear chemistry, chemical analysis.



Skills:

- The course aims to give pupils the necessary skills of scientific enquiry and investigation, to allow them to be scientifically literate, and to understand the relevance of Chemistry in their own lives. Studying Chemistry develops a wide range of practical and analytical skills, alongside core scientific knowledge and



Opportunities:

- Chemists play a vital role in the research, development and production of new everyday materials, with an increasing focus on finding sustainable solutions.
- Chemistry serves as a core central science which links the sciences and serves as fundamental training for those interested in interdisciplinary STEM careers, such as chemical engineering, forensic science, toxicology, environmental and sustainability sciences and food science and technology. It also provides an essential academic qualification for those hoping to study the biochemical sciences and engineering, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry or veterinary medicine.



Question Paper:

2 hours 30 minutes

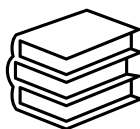
Section 1: multiple choice (25 marks)

Section 2: extended response (75 marks)

Assignment:

8 hours for research and report

20 marks (scaled to 25)



Resources:

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:

[National 5 Chemistry - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)

[HSD Firefly: Nat 5 Chemistry - High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites Completion of Form 1/2 Chemistry, or equivalent.

Classical Studies



Head of Classics: **Mr G Fyall**



Topics

- Life in classical Greece
- Classical literature
- Life in the Roman world



Skills

- demonstrating the ability to apply detailed factual and theoretical knowledge and understanding of the classical and modern worlds to draw comparisons between them
- understanding, explaining and presenting reasoned views on the usefulness of sources of evidence, using sources of evidence to compare and contrast the classical and modern worlds and using classical literature to draw reasoned conclusions about universal ideas, themes or values
- detailed factual and textual knowledge and understanding of classical Greek or Roman literature, with reference to universal ideas, themes or values which link the classical and modern worlds.



Opportunities

- Studying Classics is ideal preparation for university courses in Law, History, Politics & International Relations, Sociology, Criminology, Anthropology, Journalism & Media
- Studying Classics can enhance critical thinking – analysing causes, consequences and different viewpoints
- Research skills – gathering evidence from sources
- Evaluation skills – judging reliability and usefulness of sources
- Classics, History and Modern Studies complement each other, with shared skills that support stronger learning, enhanced confidence and improved performance.



Question Paper

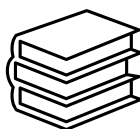
2 hours

A range of written responses using knowledge, sources and skills with mark allocations ranging from 2 to 8 marks. (Total of 80 marks)

Assignment

1 hour

The assignment has two stages: research and the production of evidence under exam conditions. (20 marks)



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Classical Studies:

[National 5 Classical Studies - SQA](#)

HSD Firefly: [Resources](#) > [Classics](#) > [Classics Resources](#)

Prerequisites n/a

Computing Science

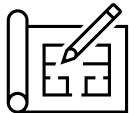


Head of Computing: **Mr S McBride**



Topics

- Software Design and Development
- Databases Design and Development
- Web Design and Development
- Computer Systems



Skills

- develop and apply aspects of computational thinking in a range of contemporary contexts
- understand advanced concepts and processes in computing science
- analyse, design, implement and evaluate a range of digital solutions with some complex aspects
- communicate advanced computing concepts and explain computational behaviour clearly and concisely, using appropriate terminology
- develop awareness of current trends in computing technologies and their impact in transforming and influencing our environment and society



Opportunities

- understand the central role of computing professionals as creative problem-solvers and designers, able to design, implement and operate hardware and software systems
- understand the far-reaching impact of information technology on our environment and society
- develop and strengthen skills in analysis and problem-solving, software and information system design, development, implementation, testing and evaluation



Question Paper

1 hour 30 minutes

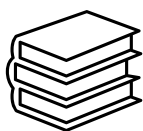
Mix of short and extended response

Section 1: Software Development and Computer Systems (55 marks)

Section 2: Databases **or** Web (25 marks)

Assignment

6 hours, open book but under strict supervision (40 marks)



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:

[National 5 Computing Science - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)

HSD Firefly: [National 5 Computing Science – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites Completion of Form 1/2 Computing Science, or equivalent

Drama



Head of Subject: **Mrs L Carne**



Topics

- Thematic based units delivered to enhance drama skills in mime and movement, acting, devising drama, directing, analysis of text and productions.
- Production Skills to include the learning of lighting, sound, costume, set, make-up, props and acting



Skills

- Explore and develop a range of drama skills and ways of communicating thoughts and ideas to an audience using acting and applying the production design skills of set, props, lighting, sound, costume and make-up and hair.
- Respond to stimuli, including text, using practical and theoretical exploration to create theatre and to develop knowledge and understanding of form, structure, drama terminology, genre and style when creating and presenting drama.
- Enhanced creativity, resilience, confidence and critical thinking.
- Develop teamwork, leadership and problem-solving skills in creating performance art and understanding the impact on an audience.



Opportunities

- Access to local and national theatre partnerships, productions, workshops and visiting practitioners to develop cultural awareness
- Increased opportunities to take on and apply skills in technical or performance roles in school productions to further develop knowledge of professional practice
- Proven transferable skills valued in careers such as Law, Medicine, Teaching, Marketing, Business, Theatre and Film
- Drama provides rich opportunities for developing cultural awareness by placing young people inside stories, perspectives and worlds different from their own



Question Paper

1 hour 30 minutes 40% of total grade
Section 1 – Questions on performances undertaken throughout the course.
Section 2 – Questions on a drama created from a chosen stimulus.

Assignment

Practical Performance 60% of total grade
Candidates are assessed on their preparation and performance of a published text either as an actor or in a production design role.



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:

[National 5 Drama - Course overview and resource - SQA](#)

HSD Firefly: [Drama – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites n/a

Economics

N5

Head of Subject: **Mr N Higgins**



Topics

- Economics of the Market – Understand how demand and supply shape prices, learn about costs, markets, and personal finance.
- UK Economic Activity – Discover how government spending and taxation, inflation, unemployment, and growth affect everyday life.
- Global Economic Activity – Explore international trade, exchange rates, multinationals, and the challenges faced by developing economies.



Skills

- Analytical Thinking – Spot patterns and trends in real-world data.
- Problem-Solving – Apply economic theory to practical issues.
- Critical Thinking – Separate facts from opinions and make informed judgments.
- Numeracy – Work confidently with graphs, costs, and revenues.
- Communication – Present ideas clearly in reports and discussions.



Opportunities

Economics opens doors to exciting careers and respected degrees. Popular paths include:

- ✓ Accountancy
- ✓ Journalism
- ✓ Professional Economist (government or private sector)
- ✓ Stockbroker
- ✓ Consultancy
- ✓ Banking & Finance



Question Paper

2 hours
90 marks – 75% of grade

Assignment

25% of grade
Research and write a 1,300-word report about a topic you are passionate about



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:
[National 5 Economics - Course overview and resource - SQA](#)
[HSD Firefly: National 5 Economics – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites n/a

Engineering Science

N5

Head of Subject: **Dr D Brown**



Topics

- Engineering Contexts and Challenges: roles and fields of engineering, social, environmental and economic impacts, emerging technologies, efficiency and energy audits
- Electronics and Control: analogue electricity, logic gates, Boolean expressions, flowcharts, coding, microcontrollers
- Mechanisms and Structures: gear trains, bearings, torque, pneumatic circuits, stress and strain, material properties, moments and beam reactions



Skills

- Apply engineering and scientific thinking to tackle real-world problems.
- Gain hands-on experience with electronics, mechanics, structures, gear trains, and pneumatics, as well as materials testing and simulations.
- Develop practical problem-solving and analytical skills through the engineering design process: designing, testing, evaluating, and refining solutions.
- Interpret and present data, diagrams, and measurements with confidence.
- Build transferable skills including critical thinking, teamwork, communication, and creativity, valued in further study and a wide range of careers.



Opportunities

- Understand the role of engineers as creative problem-solvers, designing and implementing solutions that impact industry and society.
- Explore how engineering shapes technology, infrastructure, sustainability, and the built environment.
- Gain hands-on experience and develop practical, analytical, and problem-solving skills that are essential for careers in engineering, technology, design, renewable energy, and related STEM fields.



Question Paper

1 hour 50 minutes

Section 1: short questions (20 marks)

Section 2: extended questions (90 marks)

Assignment

Application of skills to solve a practical or simulated engineering problem

8 hours, under a high degree of supervision (50 marks)



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Engineering Science:

[National 5 Engineering Science - Course overview - SQA](#)

HSD Firefly: [Engineering Science – High School of Dundee](#)

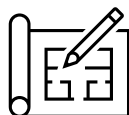
Prerequisites n/a

Head of Subject: **Mrs A Tevendale**



Topics

Pupils in Form 3 and Form 4 will follow a two-year course. They will undertake a full and detailed study of language and literature, which will prepare them for presentation at National 5 English.



Skills

- Pupils will have acquired skills in analysis, literary appreciation, writing, listening and talk in Forms 1 and 2, and the aim of this course is to develop and extend these skills and to encourage a more in-depth study of English, with a view to gaining a National 5 qualification and, looking ahead, to prepare pupils for Higher English and beyond.
- As part of the National 5 English course, all pupils must also complete and pass a Talk Unit Assessment.



Opportunities

- Throughout each year of Forms 3 and 4 pupils will study poetry, prose, drama and media, looking at a wide range of texts.
- Pupils will be able to engage actively in class by contributing helpfully to class discussion and debate; they will learn to collaborate.
- Pupils will have the higher order literacy skills to ensure they are ready for Higher English and demanding university courses.



Question Papers

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation. 1 hour (30%)
Critical Reading: textual analysis on a choice of Scottish texts; critical essay on a text studied in class. (40%)

Folio

One piece of broadly discursive or broadly creative writing of around 1000 words. First draft completed under supervised conditions in class. (30%)



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:
[National 5 English - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)
HSD Firefly: [English - High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites Completion of Form 1/2 English, or equivalent

Geography

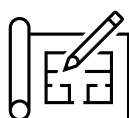
N5

Head of Subject: **Miss J Stewart**



Topics

- Physical environments – coasts – glaciation – meteorology
- Human environments – urban – rural – population – development
- Global Issues – climate change – tourism



Skills

- Geographical skills of field work, research, data analysis, evaluation and presentation are used to support learning and pupils will learn to process information through maps, diagrams, graphs and fieldwork. The study of geography at National 5 level will therefore assist pupils in developing a range of important transferable skills that can be applied across the curriculum and wider world or work.
- Pupils are expected to carry out practical fieldwork in a variety of locations to support their understanding of the geographical themes studied.



Opportunities

- A growing awareness of the impact of human activity upon the environment and scarce resources, the study of Geography fosters positive, life-long attitudes of environmental stewardship, sustainability and global citizenship. This qualification will furnish you with the knowledge and skills to enable you to contribute effectively to your local communities and wider society and become a future global decision maker.
- The cross-curricular nature of the subject allows it to sit comfortably alongside other humanities, sciences and the arts.
- Geography at National 5 develops an understanding of a variety of the human, physical and environmental aspects of the contemporary world. Pupils develop an understanding of how people interact with their environment and are encouraged to take an interest in and develop an understanding of environmental issues.



Question Paper

2 hours 20m worth 80%
Physical Environments – 30 marks
Human Environments – 30 marks
Global Issues – 20 marks

Assignment

1 hour
Assignment worth 20%.



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:
[National 5 Geography – Course overview and resources – SQA](#)
[HSD Firefly: Geography – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites Completion of Form 1/2 Geography, or equivalent

History

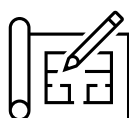
N5

Head of Subject: **Mr G Fyall**



Topics

- The trade in enslaved African people, 1770–1807
- Free at Last? Civil Rights in the USA, 1918 - 1968
- Scotland and the Era of the Great War, 1900–1928



Skills

- developing and applying skills, knowledge and understanding across contexts from Scottish, British and European and World history
- evaluating the origin, purpose, content and/or context of historical sources
- evaluating the impact of historical developments
- presenting information in a structured manner
- evaluating the factors contributing to historical developments
- drawing reasoned conclusions supported by evidence



Opportunities

- Studying History is ideal preparation for university courses in Law, History, Politics & International Relations, Sociology, Criminology, Anthropology, Journalism & Media
- Studying History can enhance critical thinking – analysing causes, consequences and different viewpoints
- Research skills – gathering evidence from sources
- Evaluation skills – judging reliability and usefulness of sources
- History, Modern Studies and Classics complement each other, with shared skills that support stronger learning, enhanced confidence and improved performance.



Question Paper

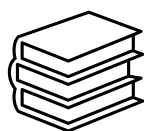
2 hours 20 minutes

A range of written responses using knowledge, sources and skills with mark allocations ranging from 4 to 9 marks.
(Total of 80 marks)

Assignment

1 hour

The assignment has two stages: research and the production of evidence under exam conditions. (20 marks)



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:
[National 5 History - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)
[HSD Firefly: National 5 - History – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites n/a

Head of Languages: **Mrs L Smith**



Topics

- **Translating:** This course lets students explore detailed Latin passages from Roman history and mythology while building the language skills required to translate them. They also strengthen their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar forms, and sentence structure.
- **Literary appreciation:** This course helps students gain the skills needed to understand, analyse, and evaluate authentic Latin texts, as well as English translations of them. Students also learn about literary techniques and elements of Roman culture. We will read a ghost story and a story about a dolphin which becomes a celebrity in the North Africa town of Hippo by Pliny the Younger as well as the retelling of the tragic Greek myth of Daedalus and Icarus by Ovid.



Skills

- the language skills of translating
- the ability to understand, analyse and evaluate
- the ability to apply knowledge of language
- knowledge and understanding of literary techniques and Roman culture
- The course contributes to the development of literacy skills by providing candidates with opportunities to listen, talk, read and write in English, and to read in Latin.



Opportunities

The course develops linguistic awareness and analytical skills through the study of Latin texts. It provides candidates with opportunities to develop translation skills and to understand, analyse and evaluate through the study of Latin language and literature.

- It also promotes an appreciation of the similarities and differences of other
- cultures and how the Roman legacy is still seen today in language, architecture and culture across three continents.



Question Paper

Paper 1: Literary appreciation (60 marks)
1 hour 45 minutes
Paper 2: Translating (40 marks)
1 hour

Assignment

None



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:

[National 5 Latin - SQA](#)

HSD Firefly: [Latin Resources – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites Completion of the Form 1/2 Latin course or a keen interest in the Classical World.

Mathematics

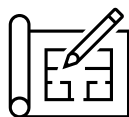
N5

Head of Subject: **Mrs L Craig**



Topics

- Expressions and Formulae
- Relationships
- Applications



Skills

- Understand and use key mathematical concepts, relationships and numerical skills
- Apply algebraic methods, including manipulating expressions and solving equations
- Use geometric and trigonometric techniques to solve practical problems
- Interpret, analyse and present statistical information



Opportunities

- Progression to Higher Mathematics
- Supports STEM-related subjects such as physics, engineering, computing, and economics
- Core and extension material for challenge and progression
- Consolidate and integrate skills across different mathematical topics
- Develop problem-solving and logical thinking skills
- Build confidence in mathematical language and notation
- Encourage independent learning and resilience



Question Paper

90 marks

Paper 1: Non-Calculator (1 hour) 40 marks

Paper 2: Calculator (1 hour 30 minutes) 50 mark

Assignment

None



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:

[National 5 Mathematics - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)

[HSD Firefly: Mathematics – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites Completion of Form 1/2 Mathematics, or equivalent

Modern Languages

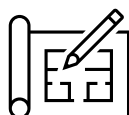
N5

Head of Languages: **Mrs L Smith**



Topics

- Society: Family and friends, lifestyles, media, global languages and citizenship.
- Learning: Learning in context, education.
- Employability: Jobs, work and CVs
- Culture: Planning a trip, other countries, celebrating special cultural events.



Skills

- Receptive skills: you will improve your ability to understand a range of texts when reading in the foreign language and prove your understanding when listening to short extracts on a wide variety of topics.
- Productive skills: Talking and Writing will also develop to the extent that you will be able to converse in a detailed and confident manner and produce an extended piece of writing which is well-structured and accurate.



Opportunities:

- Enables you to make connections with different people and their cultures and play a fuller part as a global citizen.
- In addition to cognitive benefits, language learning builds valuable skills for learning, life and work such as enhanced communication skills and adaptability.
- Heightened cultural awareness through foreign travel, day trips, cookery lessons and film study.
- N5 study provides you with the linguistic skills to progress to Higher level and beyond.



Question Paper

Paper 1: Reading & Writing 1 hour 30 mins
Reading (30 marks)
Writing (20 marks)
Paper 2: Listening 30 mins (20 marks)
Speaking assessment (30 marks)

Assignment (20 marks)

Piece of writing of 120-200 words of a topic of particular interest.
Completed In school under strict supervision and with the help of a writing stimulus in English.
Dictionary permitted.
12.5% of overall grade, 20 marks.



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:
[National 5 Modern Languages - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)
[HSD Firefly: Modern Languages - High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites Completion of the Form 1/2 language course, or equivalent. This course would also suit native speakers.

Modern Studies

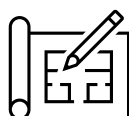
N5

Head of Subject: **Mr G Fyall**



Topics

- Democracy in Scotland
- Crime and the Law
- World Power: USA



Skills

- developing and applying detailed skills, knowledge and understanding in political, social or international contexts
- using a range of sources of information to support and oppose views
- giving detailed justifications for decisions and conclusions
- demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the main democratic processes, institutions and organisations which make up political life in Scotland by giving factual descriptions and detailed explanations
- demonstrating knowledge and understanding of a major social issue in Scotland and the UK, focusing on crime and the law, by giving factual descriptions and detailed explanations
- demonstrating knowledge and understanding of an international issue, relating to either a significant world power or contemporary world issue, by giving factual descriptions and detailed explanations.



Opportunities

- Studying Modern Studies is ideal preparation for university courses in Law, Politics & International Relations, Sociology, Criminology, Journalism & Media
- Modern Studies can enhance critical thinking – analysing causes, consequences and different viewpoints
- Research skills – gathering evidence from sources
- Evaluation skills – judging reliability of sources
- Modern Studies, History, and Classics complement each other, with shared skills that support stronger learning, enhanced confidence and improved performance.



Question Paper

2 hours 20 minutes

A range of written responses using knowledge, sources and skills with mark allocations ranging from 4 to 9 marks.
(Total of 80 marks)

Assignment

1 hour

The assignment has two stages: research and the production of evidence under exam conditions. (20 marks)



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:
[National 5 Modern Studies – Course overview and resources – SQA](#)
[HSD Firefly: Modern Studies – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites n/a

Music



Head of Subject: **Dr L Stuart Fotheringham**



Topics

- Performing Skills
- Composing Skills
- Understanding Music



Skills

- You will need to be able to perform between 8 and 8½ minutes of music on two instruments (or one instrument and voice) at Grade 3 standard. Most instruments and instrument combinations are permitted but consult the Director of Music for further information. Instruments will be studied in individual music lessons.
- You will learn how to read and write music and create your own pieces and songs.
- You will develop your understanding of music, learning how it has evolved over time; what instruments there are, how they play together and what kind of music they play, and how to recognise key features of how music works.



Opportunities

- To learn in depth two instruments (or one instrument and voice) of your own choice individual music lessons with a skilled and experienced instructor. At present, these lessons are offered free of charge to those studying SQA Music.
- To learn how to express yourself in performance and in creating your own original music.
- To have a better understanding of how music works and why it has such a powerful hold over so many people.



Question Paper

Listening Paper – 1 hour (35%)
Performance – 8-minute programme
performed in front of a Visiting Assessor

Assignment

60-90 seconds composition, including
commentary



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:
[National 5 Music – Course overview – SQA](#)
HSD Firefly: [N5 Music – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites You should already know how to play at least one instrument already.

Physical Education

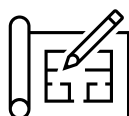


Head of Subject: **Mr E Jack**



Topics

- Performance – this aims to develop candidates’ ability to perform in physical activities.
- Factors Impacting on Performance – candidates consider the effects of mental, emotional, social and physical factors on performance, and acquire an understanding of how to plan, monitor, record and evaluate performance development



Skills

- demonstrating a comprehensive range of movement and performance skills safely
- understanding factors that impact on performance
- planning, developing and implementing approaches to enhance personal performance
- monitoring, recording and evaluating performance development
- decision-making and problem-solving



Opportunities

The course aims to enable candidates to:

- develop the ability to safely perform a comprehensive range of movement and performance skills
- understand factors that impact on personal performance in physical activities
- build capacity to perform effectively
- develop approaches to enhance personal performance
- monitor, record and evaluate performance development



Practical Performance

60 Marks – equates to 50% of total
Assesses candidates’ ability to perform in two different physical activities

Portfolio

60 Marks – equates to 50% of total
Assesses the learner’s knowledge and understanding of the performance development process



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:
[National 5 Physical Education – Course overview – SQA](#)
[HSD Firefly: Physical Education – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites n/a

Physics

N5

Head of Subject: **Dr D Brown**



Topics

- Dynamics: describing motion, Newton's laws, gravitation and projectiles
- Space: challenges and benefits of space exploration, the Big Bang Theory, spectra
- Electricity: voltage, current, resistance and power, practical circuits
- Properties of Matter: energy changes, heat, kinetic theory of gases
- Waves: properties, EM spectrum, diffraction, refraction and applications
- Radiation: radioactive decay, activity and half-life, dosimetry, fission and fusion



Skills

- Develop knowledge and understanding of fundamental concepts in Physics.
- Apply analytical and problem-solving skills to a range of scientific contexts.
- Conduct scientific inquiry and investigations using appropriate methods and equipment.
- Interpret and analyse data using graphs, tables and charts effectively.
- Communicate scientific ideas and results clearly, using appropriate terminology
- Develop literacy, numeracy, and technological skills relevant to Physics.



Opportunities

- Explore the physical principles underlying natural phenomena, from the microscopic to the cosmic scale.
- Understand the role of Physics in technology, engineering, and everyday life.
- Gain experience in experimental design, data analysis, and evidence-based reporting.
- Build a strong foundation for further study in Physics and STEM subjects, and careers such as engineering, medical physics, aerospace, renewable energy, materials scientist, or scientific research.



Question Paper

2 hour 30 minutes

Section 1: multiple choice (25 marks) 20%

Section 2: restricted and extended

responses (110 marks) 60%

Assignment

8 hours

6 hours 30 minutes research stage

1 hour 30 minutes report stage

(20 marks) 20%



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Physics

[National 5 Physics - Course overview and resources - SQA](#)

HSD Firefly: [Physics – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites Completion of Form 1/2 Physics, or equivalent

Practical Cookery



Head of Subject: **Mrs L Ross**



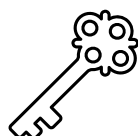
Topics

- Cooking Processes, Food Preparation Techniques and Garnishing
- Characteristics of Ingredients and Sustainability
- Current Dietary Advice
- Food Hygiene and safety



Skills

- food preparation techniques and cookery processes
- evaluating dishes
- understanding and demonstrating knowledge of the importance of sourcing sustainable ingredients
- understanding and demonstrating knowledge of current dietary advice relating to the use of ingredients
- planning, costing, organisational and time management
- producing, portioning and presenting dishes



Opportunities

- Pupils automatically sit the REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate
- NQ Professional Cookery SCQF Level 5 or 6 Modern Apprenticeship in Form 5 or 6 at Dundee and Angus College



Question Paper

1 hour

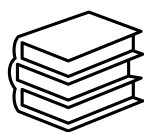
This is worth 25% of the overall mark.

Assignment

2 hours 30 min

Plan, prepare and cook a three-course meal.

This is worth 75% of the overall mark.



Resources

SQA course information and past papers for National 5 Subject:

[National 5 Practical Cookery - Course overview and resource - SQA](#)

HSD Firefly: [National 5 - Practical Cookery – High School of Dundee](#)

Prerequisites n/a – NB: There is an annual charge of £150 (estimated) for food costs.