NQ verification 2023–24 round 1

Qualification verification summary report

Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	**People and Society**
Verification activity:	**Event**
Date published:	**July 2024**

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H249 73	National 3	People and Society: Investigating Skills
H24A 73	National 3	People and Society: Comparing and Contrasting
H24B 73	National 3	People and Society: Making Decisions
H249 74	National 4	People and Society: Investigating Skills
H24A 74	National 4	People and Society: Comparing and Contrasting
H24B 74	National 4	People and Society: Making Decisions

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

♦ a larger number of centres provided a range of topics and explored new ideas through adapting the current examples in the SQA unit assessment support packs

♦ a number of centres gave candidates opportunities for personalisation and choice within the focus of their unit

♦ centres used local case studies, with a number using a local focus, for example investigating their own local area

♦ some centres created their own assessments, which are of a good standard

♦ many centres adapted the unit assessment support packs to the topics or issues they studied and provided appropriate judging evidence tables

♦ some centres created a work booklet to guide and document candidate progress through units — this is a supportive approach to assist candidates in achieving the outcomes

- some centres provided their internal verification policy and completed checklists for the unit assessments, which allowed verifiers to check assessment approaches more easily

Action points

As in previous years, centres are advised to submit centre-devised unit assessments to SQA for prior verification. These assessments must include a judging evidence table.

This year a large number of centres used centre-devised assessments without prior verification. When adapting an SQA unit assessment support pack, the judging evidence table should also be adapted to include possible answers that meet the assessment standard(s) in relation to their topic or issue.

Assessment command words should be appropriate to the level of the assessment. For example, at National 3 'explain' is not needed and could result in the over-assessment of candidates.

Key ideas should be chosen from the list on page 4 of the unit specification. Candidates must be assessed using the specified key ideas — it is not a free choice.

Some centres did not provide evidence of verification and/or their internal verification policy for their centre. The internal verification toolkit on SQA's website gives meaningful guidance and references

Assessment judgements

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

- there was a noticeable increase in the number of centres where the assessors marked exactly where the candidate achieved each assessment standard on the candidate's work, which allowed verifiers to identify assessment judgements
- some centres identified which key ideas had been chosen by the candidate and made this clear in the margins of the candidate's evidence, which was useful for verifiers in quality assuring assessment judgements
- a few centres cross-marked the candidates' work, which helped to ensure that assessment judgement decisions were more reliable

Action points

On candidate evidence, centre assessors must make clear where each candidate has achieved each assessment standard. This enables verifiers to identify and verify centres' assessment judgements. The role of external verifiers is to verify centre assessment judgements; it is not their role to assess candidate evidence.

A number of centres did not seem to recognise that for some assessment standards the candidates have to demonstrate the skill or knowledge more than once. Centre staff must apply the information from the relevant judging evidence table when making assessment judgements.

A number of centres awarded assessment standard 2.3 (key ideas) where the candidate had written them. The assessment standard requires the candidate to show knowledge and understanding of the key ideas, not the ability to identify them or define them in isolation.

When verbal discussions are taking place to establish a candidate's understanding of an assessment standard, the questions asked by the assessor and the candidate's responses should be recorded on the candidate evidence. This allows the verification team to verify the judgement made by the centre, based on the content of these discussions.

Where centres identified in their centre verification policy that cross-marking or blind marking was used for quality assurance, this must be evident. Two signatures on the candidate evidence or the candidate assessment record is not sufficient evidence of the process that has been undertaken.

Section 3: general comments

A number of centres submitted candidate work that was unmarked. The purpose of external verification is to review a centre's assessment evidence and determine if their approach to assessment and their assessment judgements are in line with the national standard. It is not the role of external verifiers to assess candidates' work.

Centres are only required to submit one unit for verification purposes. Some centres submitted three units for this round of verification.

Centres must ensure that the evidence presented by candidates is their own work and should not accept evidence that has been copied and pasted or plagiarised.

NQ verification 2023–24 round 2

Qualification verification summary report

Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	People and Society
Verification activity:	Event
Date published:	July 2024

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H24C 74	National 4	People and Society Added Value Unit — Assignment

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

♦ Most centres did not provide an assessment tool and, therefore, we presumed that they had used SQA's unit assessment support packs.

♦ Centres that used a centre-devised assessment had mixed success as they did not use the prior verification service. Candidates did not provide the necessary evidence to meet all of the assessment standards as they had not been directed to provide these. In particular, assessment standard 1.1 (key ideas) was not a part of the assessment tool and for assessment standard 1.5 a conclusion was asked for in the assessment tool. Asking the candidates to conclude does not always mean the skill of making a decision or comparing and contrasting has been undertaken.

♦ Some centres created a booklet that guided candidates through all of the assessment standards individually. This was a successful approach that allowed the candidate to clearly follow instructions and meet all of the assessment standards.

Assessment judgements

It is the role of the verification team to assess the centre's judgement of the assessment standard and not to mark candidates' evidence. The centre should either clearly annotate where the candidate has achieved the assessment standard (for example assessment standard 1.4 requires the candidate to describe and explain the key features twice), and this should be a sentence or phrase, not a paragraph or annotation at the bottom of a presentation slide.

♦ Most centres' judgements were in line with national standards.

♦ Some centres used the candidate assessment record exceptionally well to highlight where the candidate had achieved the selected assessment standards.

♦ Assessment standard 1.2 was poorly evidenced by many centres as the only evidence of collecting information was the inclusion of a web page or book title with no evidence of the collection of the evidence.

♦ A number of centres accepted web pages as evidence for assessment standard 1.2 without the URL (for example YouTube). Some effort must be made to identify the source.

♦ Candidates must organise the evidence they have collected to gain assessment standard 1.3 and this was poorly evidenced on some centre's submissions.

♦ For assessment standard 1.6, the candidate must provide a presentation and not just a copy of the evidence they collected.

Section 3: general comments

♦ Centres should ensure that candidates have an open choice of topic or issue to research as many centres provided evidence where all candidates in the centre had completed the same topic.

♦ In some cases, centres submitted the investigation unit for round 2 instead of the added value unit.

♦ Centres must ensure that the evidence presented by candidates is their own work and in their own words. Centres should not accept evidence that has been copied and pasted or plagiarised.

♦ In many centres there was limited evidence of cross marking despite the centre providing a robust quality assurance policy.