



NQ Verification 2014–15

Key Messages Round 1

01 Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Computing Science
Verification event/visiting information:	Event
Date published:	March 2015

National Courses/Units verified:

H223 76 Software Design & Development (Higher)
H223 75 Software Design & Development (National 5)
H223 74 Software Design & Development (National 4)

H226 76 Information Systems Design & Development (Higher)
H226 75 Information Systems Design & Development (National 5)
H226 74 Information Systems Design & Development (National 4)

02 Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Centres should ensure that they are making use of the most recent Unit assessment support packs (UASPs) and the appropriate Evidence Requirements.

Centres should ensure that if they make changes to the assessments in the UASPs the assessments still cover all the Assessment Standards. The prior verification service is available free of charge. Full details, along with appropriate forms for submission, can be found at www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/63004.html.

Assessment judgements

Most centres were judging the evidence according to the appropriate Assessment Standard.

It is important that Assessors record on the candidate responses when they decide that an Assessment Standard is achieved. This would help with support for the candidates, internal verification of the candidates' work and, eventually, the external verification process.

Any observed evidence should be supported, where possible, by screenshots. This is important in areas such as databases and websites.

Centres are encouraged to create their own marking schemes to show acceptable answers. The exemplars provided with the UASPs are not definitive Marking Instructions and centres should not feel constrained by the answers they contain. If an answer meets the Assessment Standard as defined in the 'Judging evidence' tables within the UASPs, then it is an acceptable answer.

If a candidate has produced a working program/information system then it is assumed that they have identified and corrected any errors. There is no requirement for the candidate to create errors to satisfy this Outcome.

The candidate responses accepted by some centres for Higher Information Systems Design & Development Assessment Standard 1.1 (Applying contemporary design and development methodologies) was much lower than required when applied to website design. The design should show where the implementation of the required structure and links will take place, eg internal and external hyperlinks and search facility.

The use of internal commentary to cover Assessment Standard 1.2 (Describing the purpose of a range of programming constructs and how they work) in the Software Design and Development Unit is an acceptable assessment approach and can help to reduce the amount of assessment undertaken. It can, however, be difficult for candidates to ensure that they cover the Assessment Standard using this method. Assessors should ensure that candidates understand the Assessment Standard being undertaken using this approach.

If the candidate's evidence does not satisfy all of the Assessment Standards, the candidate only needs to be re-assessed on the specific part of the Assessment Standard(s) that have not been met.

03 Section 3: General comments

Many centres have excellent internal verification practices in place, but it can be difficult to see what decision has been agreed by the Assessor and the Internal Verifier. It would be helpful to show the final decision and the reasons why it was reached.

Evidence of internal verification must be provided, as should a detailed description of how this has been carried out by the centre. Cross-marking should be clearly shown in a different colour to the original marking, as should the signature of the cross-marker. Clear guidance exists on SQA's website regarding internal verification:

www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/InternalVerificationGuideforSQACentres.pdf

However, a number of centres are labelling their evidence as interim, although they have candidate evidence for all the Outcomes for the Unit. Evidence can only be interim if it does not include evidence for all the Assessment Standards within the Unit.