

NQ Verification 2014–15

Key Messages Round 1

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	English and Communication
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	March 2015

National Courses/Units verified:

National 3: Producing Language & Understanding Language

National 4: Analysis and Evaluation & Creation and Production

National 5: Analysis and Evaluation & Creation and Production

New Higher: Analysis and Evaluation & Creation and Production

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Many centres were confidently combining assessment approaches and generating naturally-occurring evidence which linked to the wider learning and teaching of the class rather than taking separate Unit-by-Unit approaches. There were many examples of combining writing, talking and listening assessments which linked to the context studied in classes. This has been a marked change from last year and should be further encouraged.

The majority of reading assessments were based on the Unit assessment support packs.

There were a small number of out-dated Unit assessment support packs being used for assessments. It would be advisable for centres to use the most recent versions of the Unit assessment support packs, which are available on SQA's secure website.

Assessment judgements

Centres demonstrated accurate assessment judgements and confidence in applying the Assessment Standards. This was demonstrated through centres highlighting the Assessment Standards on candidates' scripts and through their

internal verification processes. The level of certainty and clarity from centres in arriving at assessment judgements has increased from previous verification rounds.

A small number of centres were still basing judgements solely on marks, often to the disadvantage of candidates. Centres should be reminded that the basis for making assessment judgements should be solely on the Assessment Standards.

In relation to Analysis and Evaluation, some centres were still unclear that candidates needed to identify and analyse two features of language in order to achieve Assessment Standard 1.3. Similarly, some centres were unclear that two different language features needed to be identified and analysed at Higher level.

A small number of centres still demonstrated a level of uncertainty in making accurate assessment judgements at National 4, with some centres applying a lenient approach to the Assessment Standards. This was particularly in relation to Assessment Standards 1.1 and 2.1 at National 4, where candidates are asked to demonstrate an understanding of purpose and audience. Greater justification needed to be provided for a small number of candidates, which need only be a general overview.

Detailed checklists were often used to highlight the assessment judgements made which were both helpful to candidates and for the internal verification process.

In relation to Talk, some centres still needed to provide greater information as to how assessment judgements were made. Some centres provided simple tick-box checklists without comments, which did not provide enough evidence to demonstrate where Assessment Standards had been achieved. Centres are reminded that detailed checklists should be used where comments are given relevant to the Assessment Standards.

03

Section 3: General comments

Centres had a secure approach to assessing at Higher level and only a small proportion of centres did not demonstrate the level of complexity required at Higher level.

Centres' approaches to internal verification were inconsistent. In a number of cases a clear policy statement was included, but the approaches highlighted were not followed by the centre. Centres should be encouraged to focus on practice rather than policy.

Where strong internal verification was evident it was focused and relevant to ensuring the Assessment Standards were accurately applied through such practices as cross-marking and sampling of candidate work.