

NQ Verification 2014–15

Key Messages Round 2

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	History
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2015

National Courses/Units verified:

H20E 74 History Assignment (National 4) Added Value Unit

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The following examples of good practice were observed:

- ◆ Many centres had significantly enhanced their internal verification policy: documenting their approach to assessment; a timeline of centre assessment activities indicating relevant department meetings; collegiate working within local authority, etc.
- ◆ Many centres demonstrated good practice in their internal verification processes: evidence of cross-marking; use of different-coloured pens to annotate scripts; cross-marking initialled by the assessor and internal verifier; collegiate working within and across local authorities.
- ◆ Some centres demonstrated sector-leading support to candidates including: student guides; learning logs; opportunities to record dialogue throughout the process of researching and creating the N4 assignment. Often, this evidence was extremely helpful to verifiers in confirming that the candidate's work was their own.
- ◆ Many centres demonstrated good practice in allowing their candidates personalisation and choice with respect to the format of their assignment. There were very effective assignments presented as short films, mind-maps and digital presentations. The latter was very effective in supporting candidates who might find extended writing challenging.

The following comments are intended as a guide to centres on future practice:

- ◆ All centres should encourage further personalisation and choice in both question choice and presentation style for the Added Value Unit. By doing so, centres will reduce the assessment burden for candidates and also the likelihood of candidates failing to produce evidence to meet the Assessment Standards.
- ◆ Centres should review SQA assessment support materials; some centres had inflated the evidence required by candidates to meet the Assessment Standards. This advice is particularly relevant to Assessment Standards 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6. For AS 1.6, it should be noted that the candidate should include some statements that indicate a summing-up of the question/issue. These need not be in the form of a conclusion nor at the end of the assignment. Examples of evidence that would meet the Assessment Standards can be found on pp 9–10 of the History Assignment (National 4) Added Value Unit assessment support pack.
- ◆ Centres should review their practice with respect to support for candidates when choosing an appropriate theme or issue. Some centres had allowed candidates to select single word topics like ‘Trenches’ or ‘What were the Trenches like?’ These titles led to descriptive content which failed to provide adequate support to candidates in providing evidence to meet AS 1.4 (*identifying three key features, giving at least two points for each key feature*) and AS 1.5 where candidates are required to *describe at least two causes or impacts of the theme or event*. Examples of responses which meet the standard can be found on p. 7 of the History Assignment (National 4) Added Value Unit assessment support pack.
- ◆ Centres should ensure that they support candidates throughout the researching and creating of their National 4 Added Value Unit. In particular, centres are reminded that it is possible for them to give reasonable assistance to candidates in ensuring that their assignment remains relevant to the chosen issue or that the title is amended to reflect the independent research of the candidate.

Assessment judgements

The following examples of good practice were observed:

- ◆ Centres had clearly identified where candidates had achieved specified Assessment Standards, eg by annotation, often colour-coded to indicate cross-marking.
- ◆ Many centres supported their assessment judgements with appropriate assessor comments on the candidate evidence or record sheet.

The following comments are intended as a guide to centres on future practice:

- ◆ Assessors should ensure that they annotate candidate evidence at the point of achievement. This will help ensure consistent and reliable assessment

judgements in line with national assessment standards and will facilitate internal verification.

- ◆ When completing candidate assessment sheets, centres should include a brief description of how the assessment resulted in a pass or fail rather than simply entering the result.

03

Section 3: General comments

Most of the comments in this report relate to assessment approaches because there was a direct correlation between a centre's approach to assessment and the reliability and consistency of their assessment judgements. Almost all centres had successfully followed or appropriately adapted the approach contained in History Assignment (National 4) Added Value Unit assessment support pack. Almost all centres made assessment judgements in line with national assessment standards.

Most candidates had been entered at the appropriate level and were successful in achieving their National 4 Added Value Unit. However, evidence from some candidates clearly exceeded the requirements of the National 4 Added Value Unit.

When submitting candidate evidence for external verification, some centres are not including sufficient information on the quality assurance process carried out by the centre as part of their internal verification. This information is important in helping the nominee verifier confirm the assessment approaches and judgements. Examples of good practice with respect to internal verification are given above. Further advice from SQA can be found in [Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres offering SQA Qualifications](#).