



**National Qualifications 2012
Internal Assessment Report
Biology and
Human Biology**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

National Qualifications Units

Titles of Units assessed:

Access 3

DO23 Health and Technology

Intermediate 1

DO23 Health and Technology

Intermediate 2

DO26 Living Cells

DO27 Environmental Biology and Genetics

Higher

DO29 Cell Biology

DO30 Genetics and Adaptation

Advanced Higher

DO33 Environmental Biology

Revised Higher Human Biology

FH2K Human Cells

Revised Higher Biology

FH2J Sustainability and Interdependence

General comments

The majority of centres supplied the evidence requested by SQA to allow the process of external verification to be carried out successfully.

Two centres were Not Accepted as they failed to supply a sample of evidence for Outcome 3 practical reports.

As in previous years, centres used SQA-published NAB tests as instruments of assessment for Outcomes 1 and 2 and, in most cases, the marking instructions were carefully and accurately applied.

There was evidence of internal verification and, although not its primary function, it proved invaluable as an aid to the external verification process.

There were only a small number of incidences where centres had accepted answers not given in the marking guidelines. Any additional acceptable answers should be added to the marking instructions to ensure reliability of marking across the centre.

While a number of centres attached mark sheets to the Outcome 3 evidence submitted, it is helpful if centres indicate on each individual candidate's report where the different performance criteria were achieved.

Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

In all cases, the sample size was appropriate for the centre and Course evidence being requested.

All centres had used the SQA-published NAB tests as instrument of assessments for Outcomes 1 and 2 and the most recent marking instructions available.

Most centres were aware that Outcome 3 evidence was required but this did not need to come from the Unit being verified. Outcome 3 evidence is only required once for any level of award.

Marking was clear, concise and accurate and no centre failed as a result of arithmetic error.

Evidence Requirements

The majority of centres were aware of the differences between the various levels being verified and supplied the correct Unit evidence.

Administration of assessments

All centres sampled used only the NAB tests published by SQA.

Internal verification was evident but not universal. It also ranged from double-marking of the entire sample of candidates to a small group of candidates within the sample. Where practised, the process greatly assisted the external verification process as any changes which had been made as a result of internal verification were usually clearly marked and commented upon.

Areas of good practice

A robust internal verification process is highly recommended. It is good practice to indicate on candidate scripts where there is evidence of the performance criteria or where marks have been awarded as it provides a form of feedback to candidates and aids the external verification process.

Comments by the assessor/Internal Verifier are also of value when there is debate on whether to award a mark or not.

Specific areas for improvement

Use of scientific language should be encouraged especially if it replaces 'amount'/'same amount' as these general terms appeared across the full range of Units being verified.

Candidates should be made aware of the need for controls and repetition in practical situations. Candidates should know that 'reliability' and 'accuracy' have different meanings and are achieved in different ways during a practical experiment. Candidates should be aware that averages cannot improve accuracy and that rounding up/down may be required.