

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How can my assessments be internally verified if I am the only teacher of that subject in the school?

You could use a colleague from another centre e.g. through a network of schools or a partnership arrangement with another school or college.

We are a large teaching department – can we have more than one internal verifier?

Yes – you can share out responsibility for internal verification amongst the teaching staff.

You might want to allocate specific units to different members of staff to lead on internal verification.

Alternatively, you could have a team approach – with all staff working together on understanding standards, providing mutual support in the internal assessment process and cross-marking each other's assessments.

Do I need to have specific qualifications or experience to be an internal verifier?

For new National Qualifications, you don't need specific qualifications to internally assess or to internally verify.

There are [SQA Learning and Development Units](#) for assessors and internal verifiers which could be helpful to you, but they are not mandatory.

The internal verifier needs to have sufficient subject knowledge to understand the content of assessments and national standards for the award, and be able to confirm that reliable assessment judgements have been made.

We are asked to send evidence of internal verification to SQA with assessments for prior verification. What kind of evidence is expected?

A named internal verifier needs to confirm that they have approved the version of the assessment sent to SQA as a valid assessment. This could be in the form of a signed front page for the assessment, or a footer on each page of the assessment.

The SQA verifier will be able to give you better feedback if they can see records of internal verification of the assessments – an exemplar pro forma has been provided for this, if you want to use it (see the section of the IV toolkit on pre-delivery and understanding standards).

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We are asked to send evidence of internal verification to SQA with candidate assessments for verification events and prepare evidence of IV for visiting verification. What kind of evidence is expected?

You should provide evidence of sampling and confirmation of results by the internal verifier. This could be included on the Candidate Assessment Record (CAR).

An exemplar pro forma is provided in the toolkit for recording sampling candidates' assessments, feedback to the assessor and any actions taken – if you want to use it (see the section of the IV toolkit on support and sampling during delivery)

The candidates' assessments which you select for verification by SQA should have been part of your sample for internal verification, and have been through the internal verification process before you submit them for external verification.

You should provide information when submitting assessments to SQA for verification about how your process of internal verification works, and particularly how you ensure that all staff involved in assessment understand the standards. The self-assessment pro forma provided could be helpful in explaining this (see the section of the IV toolkit on self-assessment).

How do we decide what model of verification we should use?

It is entirely at the discretion of your school, or local authority, what model of internal verification they implement, but it should meet the requirements of SQA in terms of the three stages of pre-delivery/understanding standards, on-going support for assessors and sampling of pupils' assessments, and post-delivery review.

It is at the discretion of the school whether or not it allows different approaches to internal verification to operate in different departments. Appropriate records should be retained, whatever approach is used.

A peer verification approach is entirely acceptable to SQA, but your school, or local authority, may adopt an approach of allocating internal verification responsibilities for a number of Units or Courses to members of staff.

In single-teacher or small departments, you could use a networking approach with peer discussion and cross-marking with staff from other schools.

Do we need to use standard recording documentation for internal verification?

No, there is no requirement to use standard recording documentation. The pro formas provided in this toolkit are just exemplars which you can choose to use or adapt if you wish.

You may wish to use other types of paper forms, or other electronic records.

You can use existing records as evidence of internal verification, if they cover the relevant issues - e.g. minutes of staff meetings where standards were discussed

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What happens if the internal verifier disagrees with the assessment judgements of the teacher who marked the assessments?

Firstly, don't leave verification to sampling at the end of delivery – focus on understanding standards before carrying out assessment, and sample assessments during delivery, so that any issues can be addressed.

You should not submit any Unit results for candidates until the issues identified through internal verification are resolved and the internal verifier has signed off the results.

If there is a difference of opinion, there should be a professional dialogue to reach consensus.

If necessary, involve a third party to provide another opinion, or as a sounding-board – this could be e.g. your SQA Nominee, another colleague, another member of a subject network in a different centre, or your Principal Teacher.

What support can we expect from our Nominee?

Your Nominees have a remit to cascade information and share knowledge and understanding of national standards and best practice in assessment and verification.

The mechanisms the Nominees use to cascade information are the responsibility of the local authority and/or your centre.

Nominees may also provide advice to teachers on specific issues and queries relating to the national standard and ways of assessing.

Is sampling the same as cross-marking? Is cross-marking internal verification?

The SQA document [Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres offering SQA Qualifications](#) defines a range of standardisation activities which can be carried out to help teaching staff who are assessing candidates to develop their shared understanding of the standards, and to support staff who are new to assessing the qualification – this includes cross-marking/cross-assessment, agreement trials, dual assessment, evidence review, double-marking and blind marking.

Sampling is undertaken by the internal verifier to ensure that national standards are being applied consistently by all assessors.

The guidance on sampling strategies in the toolkit explains the criteria which should be taken into account when constructing the sample to be verified - e.g. first delivery of a qualification or level, a new or inexperienced assessor, different candidate groups/locations/methods of assessment, issues identified at previous internal or external verification (see the section of the IV toolkit on support and sampling during delivery).

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Do we need to internally verify re-assessments?

If a different assessment is required for re-assessment attempts to maintain the integrity of the assessment, and you are devising this yourself, then it should be internally verified before being used. We would also strongly recommend that it is sent for prior verification by SQA.

Candidate evidence produced for re-assessment attempts should be included within your internal verification sample, to ensure that national standards are being maintained.