NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Messages Round 2

01 ▶ Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Mathematics
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2016

National Courses/Units verified:

H22H 74   Mathematics Test (National 4) added value unit

H228 74   Lifeskills Mathematics Test (National 4) added value unit

H95Y 46   Statistics

02 ▶ Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

There were still a number of centres providing evidence which was based on the old version of the unit specification. Centres must ensure they make use of a unit assessment which meets the current unit specification. Centres should use the latest versions of all SQA assessment support packs, or refer to these in the construction of new assessments. In particular, additional notes have been added to marking instructions to assist assessors in making decisions.

Mathematics added value
Most centres chose to use SQA assessment support packs; some centres made appropriate minor alterations by replacing some questions with others carefully selected from *Mathematics Test (National 4) Added Value Unit — additional questions*.

Re-assessments, where seen, were mainly constructed using questions from *Mathematics Test (National 4) Added Value Unit — additional questions*.

Some centres chose to construct a test using questions from a range of sources (SQA assessment support pack, *Mathematics Test (National 4) Added Value Unit — additional questions*, Standard Grade General past papers, Intermediate 1 past papers and original questions).

When a test is constructed it must:

♦ be presented as a test consisting of two parts: part one (non-calculator) and part two (calculator allowed)
♦ consist of questions drawn from the list of the skills described in the bullet point lists in the evidence requirements of the added value unit specification for National 4 Mathematics
♦ cover a range of skills from all three of the component units
♦ have between 43 and 47 marks (paper 1: 14–16 marks, paper 2: 29–31 marks) to include 7 to 9 mathematical reasoning marks between the two papers

The questions in each part of the test can be presented in any order. Decisions about the order of the questions may depend on the question length, level of challenge and the amount of working required by the candidate.

Centres are strongly encouraged to submit their own assessments to SQA for prior verification so they can be confident that their assessments meet the national standard.

Centres may find the [National 4 Mathematics Added Value Unit Analysis Grid](#) helpful.

Lifeskills added value
Most centres chose to use the SQA assessment support packs; some centres made appropriate minor alterations by replacing some questions with others carefully selected from *Lifeskills Mathematics Test (National 4) Added Value Unit — additional questions*.

Re-assessments, where seen, were constructed using questions from *Lifeskills Mathematics Test (National 4) Added Value Unit — additional questions*.

Centres may find the [National 4 Lifeskills Mathematics Added Value Unit Analysis Grid](#) helpful.

Statistics
All centres were making use of the latest version of the unit assessment support pack for Statistics.

Assessment judgements

Mathematics added value
The majority of centres made reliable judgements.

Centres are reminded that care should be taken in transferring marks to record grids and in the totalling of these marks.

Lifeskills Mathematics added value
The majority of centres made reliable judgements.

In money calculations, candidates must not give their answer to one decimal place. Where this occurs the final mark is not usually available.

Statistics
A number of centres had annotated their marking instructions with additional notes to ensure that consistent decisions were being made across the cohort.

Some centres provided additional feedback on the questions and marking instructions, explaining where they felt additional clarification would be helpful and this will feed into a revised version of the UASP which will be published in August 2016.

For outcome 2, candidates who created a report which included the charts and tables within the answers to the questions were more consistently marked by centres. Where candidate responses appeared in supplementary tables and graphs on additional pages, there were some examples of marks being awarded twice or not being awarded at all.

Some centres provided evidence where annotations were made on the record sheet by both the assessor and internal verifier. These gave a clear overview of the final assessment judgements. Such samples were very consistently judged.

Centres should encourage candidates to proof-read their typed solutions to outcome 2 to ensure that any typographical errors are not significant — eg in the typing of specific data points.

03 ► Section 3: General comments

Centres should use latest versions of all SQA assessment support packs, or refer to these in the construction of new assessments.

There were many examples of excellent marking and internal verification. However, some centres did not make final marking decisions clear in the event of disagreements between the assessor and the internal verifier. Once a final decision has been made, this should be shared with other centre staff.

Centre staff are reminded that all centres offering SQA qualifications must have an effective internal quality assurance system in place which ensures that all candidates are assessed accurately, fairly and consistently to national standards. Centres can refer to the Internal Verification Toolkit available here: www.sqa.org.uk/IVtoolkit

Some centres are not consistently applying follow-through marking. Where a candidate has made an error, subsequent working must be checked to see if further marks can be awarded according to the marking instructions. On some occasions, this resulted in candidates with deserving responses being recorded as 'not achieved'.

It was not always clear to see which marks had been awarded. Centres are encouraged to show clearly where marks have been awarded to candidates in accordance with the marking instructions.

Some centres did not take appropriate care when marking questions involving scatter graphs and line of best fit. All points must be carefully checked for accuracy. A line of best fit must be drawn as a single straight line. Candidates should be reminded that a line of best fit may not pass through the origin.

Where there is a mark specifically given for rounding, the unrounded answer must be given first, so the assessor can be confident that correct rounding has taken place.

When comparing fractions, eg in probability questions, candidates should be given credit for using any appropriate method (equivalent fractions, decimals or percentages).