



**National Qualifications 2011
Internal Assessment Report
Business Management**

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

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

(Freestanding Units which contribute to NPAs or NCs, etc.)

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified

DV4G 10 Business Enterprise (Int 1)
DV4G 11 Business Enterprise (Int 2)
DV4G 12 Business Enterprise (Higher)
DV4K 11 Business Decision Areas: Marketing and Operations (Int 2)
DV4K 12 Business Decision Areas: Marketing and Operations (Higher)
DV4L 11 Business Decision Areas: Finance and HRM (Int 2)
DV4L 12 Business Decision Areas: Finance and HRM (Higher)
DV4M 13 Managing Organisations: The External Environment (Advanced Higher)

General comments

It is clear from the verification exercise this year that centres have a clear and accurate understanding of the national standard. Fifty centres were externally verified this year and five of these were Not Accepted. From the five Not Accepted, two were due to the standard of marking and three because of partial re-assessment and the awarding of half marks. (A list of reasons for automatically being Not Accepted is given below.)

Most centres are assessing evidence to the national standard and the candidates presented have a very good understanding of how to tackle the various command words. However, there are still some inconsistencies when assessing 'Explain' and 'Distinguish' questions. Some centres credit marks that are merely descriptions, or worse identifications, rather than explanations.

For example, if the question was 'Explain the influence that a manager may have on business', it is not enough to simply say that managers influence a business by making decisions. There is no explanation here — simply a description. The candidate would need to expand their answer (for one explanation mark) by saying: 'Managers influence a business by making a decision which can have a negative effect on the performance and profitability of the business if it is made badly'. The candidate is giving a reason to support their answer.

In a distinction question, candidates must give both sides before one mark is awarded. For example, 'Distinguish between internal and external recruitment'. Candidates would have to write down: 'Internal recruitment is when someone who already works for the organisation is recruited for a job and external recruitment is when an unknown person from outwith the organisation is recruited for a job' — for one mark and not two.

Centres appear to be very confident in the delivery and assessment of Units in Business Management. Most centres are using the correct instruments of assessment but some are not. From 2011–12, centres will automatically be Not Accepted at external verification if they are not using the most up-to-date and valid assessment. All National Assessment Bank items (NABs) at Higher and Intermediate 2 were replaced in 2010, and these new NABs must now be used. NABs dated prior to 2010 will not be accepted at these levels. A list of valid instruments of assessment (as at June 2011) issued by SQA is as follows:

Unit code	Unit title	Assessments available
Intermediate 1 (SCQF level 4)		
DV4G 10	Business Enterprise	NAB 001, 002, 003 (August 2006) ASP 001 (May 2009)
DV4H 10	Business Decision Areas	NAB 001, 002, 003 (August 2006)
DV4J 10	Business Information and ICT	NAB 001, 002, 003 (August 2006)
Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5)		
DV4G 11	Business Enterprise	NAB 001, 002, 003 (June 2010) ASP 001 (April 2011)
DV4K 11	Business Decision Areas: Marketing and Operations	NAB 001, 002, 003 (June 2010) ASP 001 (April 2011)
DV4L 11	Business Decision Areas: Finance and HRM	NAB 001, 002, 003 (June 2010) ASP 001 (April 2011)
Higher (SCQF level 6)		
DV4G 12	Business Enterprise	NAB 004, 005 (August 2010) ASP 001 (April 2011)
DV4K 12	Business Decision Areas: Marketing and Operations	NAB 004, 005 (August 2010) ASP 001 (April 2011)
DV4L 12	Business Decision Areas: Finance and HRM	NAB 004, 005 (August 2010) ASP 001 (April 2011)
Advanced Higher (SCQF level 7)		
DV4M 13	Managing Organisations: The External Environment	NAB 001, 002, 003 (August 2006)
DV4N 13	Managing Organisations: The Internal Environment	NAB 001, 002, 003 (August 2006)
DV4P 13	Researching a Business	NAB 001, 002, 003 (August 2006)

Please note, ASPs (Assessment Support Packs) are alternatives to NABs. They are designed for candidates studying Units who will not progress to the final examination; there is less emphasis on the use of command words in these assessments.

One centre used its own instrument of assessment and this had been prior-verified by SQA. This is perfectly acceptable and is to be encouraged. However, centres are recommended to ensure they review their instruments of assessment and comply with current good practice, eg use of command words. It is unfair to disadvantage candidates by not keeping instruments of assessment up-to-date. Centres who wish to use their own instruments of assessment are strongly encouraged to seek prior-verification of these by SQA before using them with candidates.

There is a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements for the Units verified. However, as indicated, centres are still being Not Accepted because, for example, they split

assessment events, use half marks or use partial re-assessment. As a reminder, a list of reasons that would result in an automatic Not Accepted decision is given below.

A centre will be **automatically** Not Accepted if it:

- ◆ uses partial re-assessment (eg uses oral re-assessment for any part of an assessment or permits candidates to go back and attempt questions that are answered poorly)
- ◆ re-assesses candidates using the same instrument of assessment as the first attempt
- ◆ allows an assessment to be undertaken in more than one sitting — regardless of the circumstances
- ◆ submits photocopied evidence
- ◆ awards half marks
- ◆ uses instruments of assessment from the National Assessment Bank that are old and no longer valid (NB from 2011–12 centres **must** be using the new NABs for both Intermediate 2 and Higher Business Management — as above)

It can often be clear from comments written on candidates' evidence that centres fully understand what is required to gain marks. Comments can be written on internal assessments (unlike external assessments) and this is to be encouraged. They can indicate to a candidate, and also an External Verifier, why marks were or were not awarded. It is also good practice to highlight to candidates any spelling and/or grammatical errors in order to promote literacy development.

Most centres administer assessments in the appropriate way and assess their candidates competently. Most centres use brackets to indicate where marks are awarded rather than ticks and this is to be encouraged.

There was some excellent evidence of internal verification, but this was not consistent across the range of centres verified. It was often difficult to gauge the extent to which internal verification took place; a signature at the top of a candidate's script is not sufficient. Excellent practice would be to double-mark a script in a different colour of pen and to use a feedback sheet to record the original mark, the mark awarded by the Internal Verifier and a final column indicating the agreed mark. Where there is a discrepancy between the assessor and Internal Verifier, a comment should be written to indicate what mark stands and why. For example:

Question number	Mark (Assessor)	Mark (IV)	Agreed mark	Comments
1	3/4	2/4	2/4	One point had not been sufficiently explained to be awarded a mark.

Some centres used different coloured feedback sheets attached to the evidence verified indicating that internal verification had taken place and included comments. One centre was particularly innovative in its approach in that it held an 'internal verification meeting' and included the minutes from this meeting in the material sent to SQA. The minutes indicated which work had been internally verified and what the final assessment decision was. They also included other comments relating to the evidence being assessed.

It would also be good practice, and useful to the Verification Team, if centres were to include a statement outlining their internal verification process. This would assist in making a more informed judgement as to the existence or level of internal assessment used by a centre as it

is sometimes not evident in the sample submitted as to the extent and nature of the internal verification carried out and the process employed.

Areas of good practice/areas for improvement

The majority of centres are very competent at assessing qualifications in Business Management. From the external verification exercise this session, the following points were seen as good practice:

- ◆ Using the correct valid instrument of assessment.
- ◆ Using brackets to indicate where marks were being awarded.
- ◆ Thorough internal verification — including double-marking in a different colour of pen, colour-coded comments sheets, and internal verification meetings.
- ◆ Providing feedback to candidates on why they were awarded, or not awarded, marks.
- ◆ The highlighting of spelling and/or grammatical errors to promote literacy development.
- ◆ The use of centre-devised instruments of assessment that had been prior-verified by SQA.

In order to further improve the standard of assessment in Business Management, centres are encouraged to:

- ◆ Ensure the most up-to-date and valid instrument of assessment is being used every time a Unit is being delivered (NB a number of NABs are being withdrawn from 2011–12).
- ◆ Ensure they understand how to apply the marking scheme with respect to Distinguish and Explain questions (this is a particular area requiring further improvement).
- ◆ Self-reflect on how their internal verification system could be improved and provide a statement outlining the process used; a signature at the top of a script is not sufficient.
- ◆ Ensure they are aware of the reasons that will result in an automatic Not Accepted decision being given at external verification.