



# NQ Verification 2014–15

## Key Messages Round 1

01

### Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Politics
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	March 2015

#### National Courses/Units verified:

Higher Politics: Political Theory

Verification evidence was submitted by a small number of centres for Round 1 of verification activity. This report is based on that evidence and this has resulted in limited comments in the Assessment Approach and Assessment Judgement sections of the report relating to the verification activity.

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### Section 2: Comments on assessment

#### Assessment approaches

There are a number of ways in which the SQA Unit assessment requirements can be met. For example by using:

- ◆ the SQA-produced Unit assessment support packs
- ◆ prior verified centre-produced Unit assessments published on SQA's website
- ◆ your own material that has been successfully submitted to SQA for prior verification

There are three Higher Politics Unit assessment support packs that complement a range of teaching and learning approaches (Unit-by-Unit, combined and portfolio approaches). These packs have all been designed to assess Unit competence on a pass/fail basis and, rather than using cut-off scores, describe how assessment evidence is to be judged against each Assessment Standard.

Centres are reminded that the Unit Specifications have been designed to be open and flexible and give you discretion to decide the most appropriate methods

or instrument of assessment. You can therefore use your professional judgement to decide whether or not the assessment evidence from candidates meets the standards specified in the Unit Specification. However, in all cases you must use a valid assessment and ensure that it is reliably assessed.

Appendix 1 in each Unit assessment support pack has been designed to be detached and given to candidates. The context given in the appendix may be adapted to suit your candidates or modified to be made more relevant to your candidates. If you do this and retain the same level of demand/difficulty and you follow the advice in the pack, particularly in judging evidence, this is considered a minor change and does not require prior verification.

## **Assessment judgements**

The basis of assessment in the Units is pass/fail. Therefore the allocation of marks is not required and may be unhelpful to the candidate, especially when marks are not closely aligned to Assessment Standards.

Where centres use marks and indicate a pass mark, they must ensure that the pass mark allocated covers the minimum standard to pass an Assessment Standard and indicate clearly how the marks allocated translate into attainment in all of the Assessment Standards.

The judging evidence tables in the SQA-produced Unit assessment support packs describe how the Outcomes/Assessment Standards can be met. Assessment judgements have to be made against each Assessment Standard. Judging evidence may involve assessing the degree of accuracy, relevance or the number of correct responses in the evidence and, if desired, marks can be used to assist in this process.

In the case of assessment by observation or oral questioning, evidence should include assessors' comments and other relevant supporting evidence that shows clearly the basis on which assessment judgements have been made.

Centres are reminded that there are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access during the assessment task and that there are no time restrictions for the assessment task.

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## **Section 3: General comments**

A copy of the Politics Update letter issued in September can be found on the [Politics subject web page](#).

Detailed guidance on the SQA's prior verification service is available from the [SQA's Delivery Processes web page](#).

Centres are reminded that they must have an effective internal quality assurance system which ensures that all candidates are assessed accurately, fairly and consistently to national standards and that all internal assessments must be internally verified.

For external verification, it is good practice to include a note of explanation regarding the internal quality assurance policies and procedures used. Further information about internal verification is available on the web page for [SQA's Internal Verification Toolkit](#).

It is recommended that in order to maximise the opportunities for candidates to pass Unit assessments, assessors should not lose sight of the purpose of the broader Unit Outcomes by overly focusing on, and breaking down, each Assessment Standard. This can lead to over-assessment. Rather, they should look for opportunities where a piece of assessment evidence can be used to satisfy several Assessment Standards.

Centres are reminded that they should submit the following evidence for external verification:

- ◆ Evidence of the centre's internal quality assurance processes
- ◆ Details entered on the Verification Sample Form and candidate evidence Flyleaf, and on the centre's Candidate Assessment Record or equivalent
- ◆ The assessment or other stimulus that generated the judged candidate evidence
- ◆ The candidate's evidence with the assessment judgements

Before submitting evidence for external verification, centres should ensure that they have referred to the guidance documents. Guidance on evidence required for external verification of Units is provided on SQA's Quality Assurance web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/cfega](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfega)

Centres are reminded that if you produce your own assessment task or revise the SQA-produced Unit assessment support pack you must ensure it allows candidates to meet each of the Assessment Standards.

It is recommended that centres make use of [SQA's prior verification service](#) for any assessments that they devise.