

# NQ Verification 2014–15

## Key Messages Round 2

01

### Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2015

#### National Courses/Units verified:

H266 74 National 4 RMPS Added Value Unit Assignment

02

### Section 2: Comments on assessment

#### Assessment approaches

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

Most centres had supported their candidates well in their choice of a relevant topic or issue for research.

Many centres had developed their use of approaches other than a written report and many of these approaches, eg mind maps and posters, were of a better quality than last year as they were more clearly demonstrating the relevant Assessment Standards.

Many centres had also produced clear centre-based instructions for their candidates on how to meet the Assessment Standards.

Some centres had produced helpful booklets for the assignment that positively supported the candidates in their research skills and methodology.

#### Action points

The following comments are intended as a guide to centres on future practice:

Some centres produced assessment approaches that actually demanded more from the candidates than the Assessment Standards required. Centres are

reminded that the judging evidence table gives clear guidance as to what is expected from candidates.

All centres are reminded that candidates have to demonstrate that they have collected evidence from at *'least two sources one of which must include a religious viewpoint'* — this must be made clear to all candidates at the start of their research.

Some centres had allowed candidates to choose topics or issues that were leading to purely descriptive findings and this meant that the candidates had difficulty meeting parts of the Assessment Standards. Centres are referred to the fourth column of the judging evidence table on page 7 of the Added Value Unit assessment support pack which states *'A topic or issue framed in the form of a question is more likely to be more capable of generating evidence at the appropriate level'*. In the verification team's experience candidates who do not frame their issue/topic in the form of a question are indeed more likely to have difficulties in meeting all the Assessment Standards.

## **Assessment judgements**

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

Many centres clearly marked exactly where a candidate was meeting an Assessment Standard, and where there were several parts to the standard they had used a clear coding system to show the distinct parts and this was extremely helpful to the verification process.

Many centres had used highlighters to note where Assessment Standards were being met, in particular Assessment Standards 1.4 and 1.5. This practice is encouraged.

Some centres had developed feedback sheets that clearly demonstrated to candidates (and verifiers) what had been achieved and where any development was needed.

There was clear evidence throughout the centres sampled of centres becoming more confident with internal verification processes. These centres not only had clear policies but they demonstrated these policies well by their consistent cross marking and internal verification. All of this excellent work made the process of verification much easier.

## **Action points**

The following comments are intended as a guide to centres on future practice:

Some centres did not mark clearly enough on candidate scripts/materials exactly where the Assessment Standard was being met. This was particularly evident with regard to Assessment Standard 1.4 which looks for *'three key features of a topic'* and *'at least two relevant points being made about each of the key features'*. The verification process is difficult if centres do not clearly mark where each of these parts are met in the candidate's presentation.

Assessment Standard 1.2 asks for the candidate to provide *'evidence of having collected evidence from at least two sources of information'* and *'at least one of these sources should include a religious viewpoint'*. This Assessment Standard seemed to cause issues for some candidates as their presentations did not make it clear that they did indeed have at least two sources of information and some failed to give a religious viewpoint altogether.

Whilst there is no requirement for a bibliography or sources page, identifying the sources is important and this is one straightforward way of the candidates doing so. Centres are pointed to page 15 of the Unit assessment support pack which gives candidates guidance on how to take a note of their sources and state where the information comes from.

Centres are reminded that Assessment Standard 1.3 deals with the organisation of the evidence collected and should therefore be awarded on a 'holistic' basis.

Some centres did not award Assessment Standard 1.6 to their candidates as they had in their opinion failed to give a conclusion. However, centres are reminded that Assessment Standard 1.6 is awarded for the final presentation of the findings in whatever way the candidate wants to present their findings. This Assessment Standard is not linked to a conclusion.

03

## **Section 3: General comments**

There was a wide variety of topics/issues selected by candidates and centres are to be congratulated for encouraging this amongst their candidates.

There was a big reduction in 'Not Accepted' decisions this year as the vast majority of Added Value Units were clearly meeting the Assessment Standards.

The vast majority of centres submitted appropriately marked Added Value Units and this was a tremendous support to the verification team. However, centres that use 'sticky notes' to share information with the verification team are reminded that these 'notes' on occasion fall off and this makes it difficult for verifiers.

Most centres were judging the evidence according to the appropriate Assessment Standard.

There are still some candidates producing evidence that is not clearly enough RMPS, rather it has more of a Modern Studies slant. Centres are reminded that the Outcome and Assessment Standards for the Added Value Unit state that the candidate has to *'Research and use information relating to a religious, moral or philosophical topic or issue'* and that they have to include at least one religious viewpoint.

Centres are reminded that there needs to be a robustness and reliability about sources that candidates or centres are using.

There was an issue with some candidates merely copying sections from websites and making no reference to where this information is coming from. Centres need to highlight the importance of noting clearly where all information is taken from, and indeed using quotes to show that it is not their own work. Candidates are told about plagiarism in their SQA Coursework booklet that they get every year but it would be helpful for centres to remind candidates that this is not acceptable.

Centres need to make sure that they are fully conversant with all the Assessment Standards especially Assessments Standards 1.4 and 1.5.

Centres and local authorities are once again reminded that they will find it very helpful to enlist the support of RMPS nominees in their area for advice and guidance.