

National Qualifications 2007

Senior Verifier's Report

Subject: Biology /Human Biology - NQ Units

Assessment Panel: Biology / Human Biology

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification procedures that have taken place within National Qualifications in this subject.

NATIONAL UNITS

TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS MODERATED

ACCESS / INTERMEDIATE 1

INTERMEDIATE 2

HIGHER

HIGHER HUMAN

ADVANCED HIGHER BIOLOGY

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

General comments:

Most centres provided evidence of a very high standard.

- All centres verified had used NAB assessments to test Outcome 1 and 2 with the majority using earlier versions of the published NABs.
- Marking was accurate and consistent with most of the centres using updated mark schemes.
- Any changes made to the published mark scheme by the centre, should be submitted with the evidence.
- Where internal verification results in changes, these should be obvious to the central verification team.
- One completed report is required for Outcome 3 (it need not be linked to the Unit being verified) and must be submitted with the candidate evidence.
- Internal assessment procedures at all levels requires that candidates pass Outcome 3 before they can gain a course award. Internal submissions should be finalised before central verification so evidence should be available for verification.
- The Outcome 3 report used as evidence should allow the candidates the opportunity to achieve ALL of the required PCs.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

The practice of internal verification should continue to be encouraged.

Unlike the assessment papers, the marking of Outcome 3 was rarely internally verified and many of the candidate scripts submitted failed to clearly indicate where each of the specific PCs were being awarded.

Unit test are PASS or FAIL – many centres appear to award a variety of grades, a practice which should be discouraged.

For Outcome 3

The degree of complexity should reflect the level of the award, in particular, the practical work undertaken and the reporting of such work at AH.

Marks should not be awarded for extrapolation of graph work, which is not supported by the evidence/results.

More specific evaluation relating to the experiment should be encouraged rather than the use of the generalised statements that regularly appear. For example statements along the lines of “the range of temperatures tested could have been every five degrees rather than every ten” or “20 seeds in each petri dish rather than 10” should be encouraged, instead of a general statement such as “the experiment should have been repeated several times and an average taken.”

In terms of staff development, the Senior Verifier’s report should be made available to the appropriate members of staff. This is particularly important where the member of staff responsible for forwarding the verification report is a teacher of another science discipline.