

# NQ Verification 2014–15

## Key Messages Round 2

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### Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Modern Languages — Spanish
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2015

#### National Course verified:

C769 75 National 5 Spanish performance: talking (Internally Assessed Component of Course Assessment)

C769 76 Higher Spanish performance: talking (Internally Assessed Component of Course Assessment)

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### Section 2: Comments on assessment

#### Assessment approaches

All centres verified in this round were 'accepted' having used the SQA guidelines for the Internally Assessed Component of Course Assessment — National 5/Higher performance: talking.

#### Presentation

In preparation of candidates for the assessment, assessors should refer to the grammar grid and advise candidates accordingly about ideas, themes and structures that provide scope for candidates to demonstrate a variety of tenses in their presentation. Assessors can also advise candidates about their choice of topic since often the nature of this can help develop the range of ideas and opinions a candidate may use. Assessors should also advise candidates to avoid listing.

#### Conversation

Where the interlocutor asked a range of open-ended questions, candidates had more scope to use detailed or detailed and complex language in their answers. Interlocutors should avoid questions that elicit responses from candidates that require the same or very similar language and vocabulary to that used in the presentation.

The interlocutor should also be ready to use appropriate questioning techniques to enable the candidate to employ a range of structures, tenses and ideas. Generally speaking, interlocutors were supportive of candidates and used prompting and other techniques as appropriate.

The majority of centres asked questions in the conversation that followed on naturally from the presentation topic. Many assessors went on to refer to other contexts, which encouraged candidates to use a variety of language and structures. On occasions, where candidates were asked questions about the same topic/context as in their presentation, candidates were often limited to repeating parts of their presentation in their answers. Centres should therefore try to avoid asking questions about items/themes that candidates have already addressed in the presentation. Centres should ensure they select questions that are conducive to the conversation's natural and logical development.

At Higher, centres are reminded that the conversation **must** lead into at least one other context.

### **Duration of performance**

Centres are advised to refer to the SQA 'General Assessment Information' document in relation to the recommended duration of the performance. Some centres had presentations and conversations, which were longer than the recommended length. Other centres had conversations that were shorter than is expected and this was not to the candidates' benefit. It is good practice for interlocutors to adjust the number of questions (often dependent on the length of a candidate's responses), since candidates rarely benefit from either prolonged or brief performances.

### **Natural element (National 5) / Sustaining the Performance (Higher)**

Some centres were inconsistent in their award of the 5 marks for the Natural element/Sustaining the performance aspect of the conversation. Centres should note that candidates do not have to ask a question in the conversation to be awarded marks for the natural element/sustaining the performance.

In some cases, candidates paused during the conversation to think about their answers. This is a natural part of a conversation. Assessors should give candidates the time to respond. However, if candidates struggle to answer certain questions, assessors can support the candidate by rephrasing, asking another question or changing the topic.

Some conversations were very natural as candidates answered with a mixture of longer and shorter answers. Examples of how candidates could demonstrate their ability to sustain a natural conversation could include the following (list not exhaustive):

- ◆ a mixture of extended and shorter answers (ie not a suite of short presentations/monologues)
- ◆ appropriate thinking time

- ◆ natural interjections ( ‘*Vamos a ver..*’/ ‘*entonces..*’/ ‘*por eso..*’ etc)
- ◆ acknowledgement that they have understood the question
- ◆ asking relevant questions
- ◆ sustaining the conversation, asking for repetition or clarification

## Assessment judgements

The majority of centres were ‘accepted’ since they applied the marking instructions for the performance in talking accurately and in line with national standards.

Generally speaking, the presentations were more confident than the conversations.

In some centres, the level of candidate performance was high. In some cases at National 5, candidates performed at a standard beyond National 5. In a few centres, candidates performed confidently at Higher with a high degree of accuracy and very good language resource.

In other instances, the choice of topic meant that there was limited scope for the candidates to use detailed/detailed and complex language and this is something centres must take into consideration. For example, the topic of family should involve concepts beyond those such as family members and age, even at National 5. More detailed language and ideas can be elicited, for example, if candidates are advised to talk about/are asked about relationships and reasons for the nature of such relationships. It is worth noting that some of the conversations that are shorter than the recommended length do not allow the candidates to expand on ideas and demonstrate their abilities in a more extended way.

Pronunciation and grammatical accuracy was the issue for many of the candidates who did not perform well.

In general, centres provided detailed commentaries to demonstrate how they made assessment judgements, and this is useful for the purposes of external verification. Centres are encouraged to provide brief information about how they made the assessment judgements for all candidates submitted in the sample.

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## Section 3: General comments

Centres are reminded that a playable recording must be made available for every candidate in the sample. Centres must check the sound quality of the recordings submitted for verification.

In this verification round, centres submitted candidates’ performances in CD, tape and memory stick format. Most centres clearly labelled candidate evidence, which is necessary for the verification team to proceed with the verification process.