NQ Verification 2015–16
Key Message Reports

Verification group name:	Gaidhlig
Levels	N5 and Higher
Date published:	October 2016

This Report combines all Verification Key Messages for the academic session 2015-2016.

NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Messages Round 1

01 ▶ Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Gàidhlig
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	March 2016

National Courses/Units verified:

H27D 75 Gàidhlig (National 5) Analysis and Evaluation
H27E 76 Gàidhlig (Higher) Analysis and Evaluation
H27D 76 Gàidhlig (Higher) Creation and Production

02 ▶ Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Most centres used SQA-produced Unit assessment support packages.

Many centres successfully adapted published assessments to suit the needs of their candidates or allow for personalisation and choice without affecting the Assessment Standards and Outcomes. This is to be praised.

Centres should feel free to reformat the assessments provided in the Unit assessment support packs by slightly amending the questions, the texts or the layout to suit their candidates' needs while maintaining the standards. Should the amendments to the texts or questions be minor, these would not require to be prior verified.

If a centre has used a centre-devised assessment or amended a task and/or a judging evidence table, the created/revised task and judging evidence table must be included within the submission for verification.

If centres are not confident about the validity of their centre-devised assessment, they should request for their assessment to be prior verified through the SQA's prior verification service. This should be requested before instruments are used to assess candidates.

When using Unit assessment support packs, it is important that centres use the most up to date online version. Centres have not been penalised for using older versions of the Unit assessment support packs, but will be expected in future to use the most up to date version. Should a previous version be used, it would be helpful to the nominee verifier if the centres included the corresponding version of the judging evidence table, text(s) and questions.

A feature of Unit assessment is that there are no time constraints to the assessments. Candidates should be supported, and allowed to complete an assessment to the best of their abilities.

Assessment judgements

Assessment judgements were in line with national standards, with good practice demonstrated especially by centres which implemented a strong internal verification strategy.

Centres should ensure that they submit documentation for each piece of evidence, clearly demonstrating how assessment judgements are made and clearly indicating the overall outcome of pass or fail for each Assessment Standard of the Outcome, eg an assessment outcome record or commentary or checklist for each candidate.

Detailed commentaries about each candidate's performance are very useful for internal and external verification purposes. However, it is acknowledged that this approach can be time-consuming. Therefore, a detailed checklist for each candidate's performance can be just as useful for the verifier, and more practical for the centre. This could also be used as effective feedback to candidates.

Clear feedback should be given to candidates to indicate where they have, or have not, met the Assessment Standards. This will aid their learning, as well as supporting the verification process.

A candidate should be given credit for answers so long as the candidate meets the Assessment Standards overall, regardless of whether they are necessarily in the correct place. For instance, if a pupil does not have the correct information in one question, but has it in another, they may still be able to demonstrate evidence of addressing an Assessment Standard.

Centres felt confident in accepting answers not featured in the judging evidence table, particularly regarding questions pertaining to audience and purpose and knowledge about language. Centres are encouraged to amend judging evidence tables to reflect exemplary answers and to share this good practice with other centres. Centres should amend the judging evidence tables in the Unit assessment support packs with a range of possible answers to demonstrate how assessment judgements are made for each Assessment Standard (column 4).

When focused re-assessment of an Assessment Standard has been carried out orally, details must be given of the candidate's responses. The conversation should be outlined on the candidate's script or individual record form. Candidate

evidence of focused re-assessment may include a detailed commentary demonstrating how a candidate has achieved a specific Assessment Standard.

During focused re-assessments, it is good practice for candidates to indicate any insertions or additions to written answers using a different coloured pen.

03 ▸ Section 3: General comments

The majority of centres submitted very clear and well-organised packages for verification, which is to be commended. This facilitated the verification process and assisted in providing useful feedback to centres.

It is important that the SQA Verification Sample Form is completed correctly and matches the information on pupil scripts and the Candidate Evidence Flyleaf. This is very important, as the judgement (pass/fail) entered on the Verification Sample Form is what the verification exercise is based on, regardless of what is entered on the candidates' scripts or individual record forms.

Centres should only send evidence at one level per candidate and should think carefully about how much evidence to send in to SQA for verification. For instance, if a candidate has completed a reading assessment and failed it, been re-assessed and passed the re-assessment, it is only necessary to send in the re-assessment.

Centres should arrange candidates in alphabetical order for each level and/or Unit on the Verification Sample Form: eg A–Z at National 3 reading, then A–Z at National 4 listening, then A–Z at National 5 writing. The order of the candidates' evidence must match the order on the Verification Sample Form.

The Pass/Fail column should only be completed with 'Pass' or 'Fail' and should not be left blank.

The judgement entered on the Verification Sample Form is for verification purposes (ie has the centre's assessor(s) judged the evidence in line with national standards?) and is not necessarily final as there might be an opportunity for a candidate to be re-assessed at a later stage if not already done.

It is encouraging to note that centres indicated clearly which Unit assessment support pack they used, eg Package 1, National 5, Reading.

In some centres, the clarity of the distinction between the assessor and internal verifier was shown quite clearly through the use of different coloured pens. This is considered an example of good practice.

Clear evidence of professional dialogue is shown through detailed feedback as part of centres' internal verification process.

A strong, clear internal verification process was evident, or planned for, in all centres verified. In a subject such as Gàidhlig, where there is a relatively small number of schools, and departments within schools are often a single teacher, internal verification can be difficult. Some centres have overcome this issue by linking up with other centres to good effect in order to implement internal verification.

Centres are reminded that they must have an effective internal quality assurance system in place which ensures that all candidates are assessed accurately, fairly and consistently to national standards. For further guidance, refer to the Internal Verification Toolkit.

Centres are advised that it is good practice for candidate responses to be completed in black or blue ink.

The use of word processing is to be commended in meeting candidates' needs; however, cognisance should be taken of software which does not allow accents or has autocorrect enabled as this can be of detriment to the accuracy of the candidates' responses.

The verification team is not concerned whether a candidate has passed or failed an Outcome/Unit. Nominees only verify that that the judgements made by the centre's assessor(s) are acceptable or not. Indeed a candidate may well have been re-assessed by the centre since the evidence had been submitted for verification. Centres will enter the final Unit outcomes for their candidates at a later stage (see centre's SQA Co-ordinator).

NQ Verification 2015–16
Key Messages Round 2

01 ▶ Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Gàidhlig
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2016

National Courses/Units verified:

C732 75   National 5   Performance: talking (IACCA*)
C732 76   Higher   Performance: talking (IACCA*)

*Internally assessed component of course assessment

02 ▶ Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

All the centres verified in this round used SQA guidelines for the internally assessed component of course assessment — *National 5/Higher Modern Languages Performance: talking assessment task*.

Audio recordings of conversations were supplied for all candidates.

The chosen topics for the performances provided candidates with a good opportunity to show a range of structures and demonstrate a range of language resource in order to express opinions and ideas at these levels.

The assessment consists of a conversation and as such centres should ensure that they follow this structure. Conversations should be a suitable length and adhere to the recommended duration as laid out in the *Modern Languages Performance: talking — General assessment information* documents for National

5 and Higher. Centres should note that prolonged conversations may not benefit candidates.

The assessor should allow the candidate to set the pace of the conversation unless prompting is required. The assessor should be supportive in bringing the conversation to a natural conclusion. Most assessors asked open-ended questions which are conducive to a flowing conversation and this is to be commended.

Centres should ensure that suitable assessment conditions are available which are free of external sounds and interruptions such as bells, mobile phones and people entering the room. Any interruptions which happen to occur should be documented for the purposes of assessment.

Centres are reminded to make reference to the National 5 and Higher versions of *Modern Languages Performance: talking — General assessment information* and to use them appropriately.

Centres are reminded to use the most up to date version of all documents.

Assessment judgements

Some very good practice was identified with regard to internal verification in centres. It is good practice to give a clear indication of how assessment judgements have been agreed.

The use of effective internal verification is to be commended, however professional dialogue would also be welcome.

It would be useful for the purposes of verification if centres included marks awarded by the centre's assessor as well as those awarded by the internal verifier.

03 ▶ Section 3: General comments

Most centres provided very clear and well-organised samples, which is to be commended. This has facilitated the verification process and assisted in providing useful feedback to centres.

Centres should ensure that the information provided on the Verification Sample Form matches the evidence submitted, ie the correct level and course codes, and the final assessment judgement for each candidate's evidence.

Evidence of internal verification must be submitted with the sample. This can take the form of a description of quality assurance processes put in place to ensure consistency across assessors in reaching individual candidate assessment decisions.