



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Message Reports

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|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Verification group name: | Geography |
| Levels | N3 to N5 |
| Date published: | July 2014 |

This Report combines all Verification Key Messages for the academic session 2013-14.



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Messages Round 1

01

Section 1: Verification group information

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|--|--------------|
| Verification group name: | Geography |
| Verification event/visiting information: | Event |
| Date published: | January 2014 |

National Courses/Units/Awards verified:

Geography National 3 Physical Environments – H27G 73

Geography National 4 Physical Environments – H27G 74

Human Environments – H27H 74

Global Issues – H27J 74

Added Value Unit – H27K 74

Geography National 5 Physical Environments – H27G 75

Human Environments – H27H 75

Global Issues – H27J 75

Section 2: Comments on assessment

02

Assessment approaches

Good practice

- Assessment approaches included SQA Unit assessment support packs, adapted Unit assessment support packs and centre-devised assessments.
- Assessment approaches included full Unit, interim Unit and combined approaches.
- Most centres matched the Assessment Standards to the appropriate question and this was helpful for the Verifiers.
- Assessment approaches were varied in 'question' type and were frequently geared to the needs of the cohort being presented.

Areas for consideration

- Only the evidence for the Unit/s or partial Unit/s being verified needs to be submitted.
- For an individual candidate there is no need to include multiple assessments which cover the same Assessment Standard.
- Only Unit assessments can be submitted for verification. Course assessments are ineligible for verification, eg the National 5 controlled assessment.
- Value Added Unit — centres must ensure that information is gathered from 'a map and/or fieldwork'.
- In the *Physical Environment* Unit National 4 and National 5, Assessment Standard 1.1 asks candidates to:

National 4: Interpreting geographical information from two sources in order to identify and describe any patterns which are found

National 5: Interpreting geographical information from at least two sources in order to be able to identify and explain in detail any patterns which are found

For the Assessment Standards above, a number of centres included the 'identify' in their assessments but omitted the 'patterns found'.

Assessment judgements

Good practice

- Most centres matched the assessment judgements to the appropriate question and Assessment Standard and this was helpful for the Verifiers.
- Most assessment judgements were considered to be valid by the Verifiers.
- Many centres included clear information on the minimum standard required to pass each Assessment Standard. This is essential for the verification process.

- A number of centres provided National 4 and National 5 'judging evidence' tables which clearly showed the progression needed from National 4 to National 5'
- Centre comments on scripts were helpful and insightful'

Areas for consideration

Where centres used marks and indicated a pass mark, centres must ensure that the pass mark allocated covers the minimum standard to pass an Assessment Standard. For example, if a question (Assessment Standard) asks for information about developed AND developing countries for 6 marks and the judging evidence table indicates 3 marks to pass, a candidate can only pass if their answer includes both developed AND developing countries, regardless of how many marks they achieve.

03

Section 3: General comments

Good practice

- Centres provided clear evidence of quality assurance processes, including cross marking and recorded teacher discussions about pass/fail decisions.
- Pupil responses showed a high level of knowledge and understanding on many occasions.
- Assessors took great care in organising the materials sent in for verification.

Areas for consideration

- Judgements recorded on the assessment sample form completed by all centres should match the assessment decisions on candidates' work and decisions reached in the centre's quality assurance processes.



NQ Verification 2013-14

Key Messages Round 2

01

Section 1: Verification group information

| | |
|---|------------|
| Verification group name: | Geography |
| Verification event/visiting information | Event |
| Date published: | March 2014 |

National Courses/Units/Awards verified:

Geography: Physical Environments (National 3) — H27G 73
Geography: Physical Environments (National 4) — H27G 74
Geography: Physical Environments (National 5) — H27G 75
Geography: Human Environments (National 4) — H27H 74
Geography: Human Environments (National 5) — H27H 75
Geography: Global Issues (National 4) — H27J 74
Geography: Global Issues (National 5) — H27J 75
Geography Assignment (National 4 Added Value Unit) — H27K 74

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Good practice

Centres used a variety of assessment approaches, including SQA Unit assessment support packs, adapted Unit assessment support packs and prior-verified centre-devised assessments. It was clear that in some cases, centres were sharing assessments or had collaborated to develop assessment materials.

Assessment approaches included full Unit, interim Unit and combined Unit approaches. A small number of centres used the combined approach for two Units or part of two Units.

Areas for consideration

For oral presentations, centres must ensure that they submit enough evidence for verifiers to be able to confirm the centre's judgements. This could be, for example, prompt cards used by a candidate, assessor's notes of what was said by the candidate to meet the Assessment Standard, or a recording of the presentation.

Assessment judgements

Good practice

The verification process was aided by the following examples of good practice:

- ◆ assessors matching the assessment judgements to the appropriate question and indicating on candidate evidence which Assessment Standards had been met
- ◆ assessor comments on candidate work, use of 'judging evidence' tables and clear feedback to candidates
- ◆ assessor comments for borderline candidates
- ◆ assessor records of the answers given by candidates during an oral re-assessment
- ◆ clear evidence of remediation and prompt re-assessment of candidates

Areas for consideration

The *Geography: Physical Environments* Unit **at all levels must include mapping skills**. Where a candidate is taking the *Geography: Physical Environments* Unit as part of a Geography Course, mapping skills can be assessed in the context of either the *Geography: Physical Environments* Unit or the *Geography: Human Environments* Unit. It would be helpful for verification if centres explicitly indicated this.

Geography: Physical Environments Units

- ◆ Evidence for Assessment Standard 1.1 at National 5 must include an **explanation** of the key patterns found.
- ◆ Evidence for Assessment Standard 1.1 at National 4 must include a **description** of the key patterns found.

Geography: Global Issues Units

- ◆ Evidence for Assessment Standard 2.3 at National 5 must include causes **and** effects.
- ◆ Evidence for Assessment Standard 2.3 at National 4 Unit should cover causes **or** effects.

Section 3: General comments

Good practice

Centres provided clear evidence of quality assurance processes, including cross-marking, blind marking and comparing and sampling.

Internal verification processes and policies were identified and submitted by some centres.

Areas for consideration

Where centres submitted interim evidence, ie evidence which does not cover all of the Outcomes for a Unit, they should indicate what each candidate has, so far, passed or failed. It is not possible to indicate an overall pass or fail for the Unit until all of the assessment evidence has been gathered and judged.



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Messages Round 3

01

Section 1: Verification group information

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Verification group name: | Geography |
| Verification event/visiting information | Event |
| Date published: | June 2014 |

National Courses/Units verified:

Geography: Assignment (National 4 Added Value Unit) — H27K 74

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Good practice

Centres used the Added Value Unit assessment support pack — as directed to for 2014 and 2015 presentations.

Centres provided evidence for the full Unit.

Centres and candidates used fieldwork and research-based topics to undertake the Added Value Unit.

Candidates used a variety of ways to present their evidence — reports, posters, leaflets, PowerPoint presentations and oral presentations.

Areas for consideration

Since all centres used the SQA Added Value Unit assessment support pack, there were no areas requiring consideration.

Assessment judgements

Good practice

The verification process was aided by the following examples of good practice:

- ◆ assessors matching the assessment judgements to the appropriate question/task and indicating on candidate evidence which Assessment Standards had been met
- ◆ assessor comments on candidate work, use of judging evidence tables and clear feedback to candidates
- ◆ assessor comments for borderline candidates
- ◆ assessor records of evidence generated orally by candidates

Areas for consideration

Assessment Standard 1.2: 'Collecting relevant information from at least two sources...' — Centres should ensure that candidates specifically name websites/textbooks, etc or indicate the fieldwork undertaken, in relation to the two sources used.

Assessment Standard 1.3: 'Organising and using the information collected to address the topic or issue' — Organising alone is not sufficient to meet this Assessment Standard. Centres must ensure that candidates use the information, ie manipulate or process the information/data in a straightforward way to generate the evidence required.

Assessment Standard 1.4: 'Drawing on factual knowledge and understanding to describe and briefly explain some key features of the topic or issue' — Centres must ensure that candidate evidence includes both description and explanation to overtake this Assessment Standard.

Assessment Standard 1.5: 'Applying the skills of interpreting maps or fieldwork evidence or numerical/graphical information' — Where centres use a research-based topic, the resources collected by the candidate must include information which allows them to interpret maps or numerical/graphical information.

03

Section 3: General comments

Good practice

Centres provided clear evidence of quality assurance processes, including cross-marking, blind marking and comparing and sampling.

Internal verification processes and policies were identified and submitted by some centres.

Where each Assessment Standard was overtaken, centres indicated this on candidate scripts by tick, comments and annotating candidate work with 1.1, 1.2, etc in the appropriate place.

Many centres used the Candidate Assessment Grid to indicate how pass/fail judgements were made.

Areas for consideration

Candidates need to overtake each Assessment Standard only once. A small number of centres over-assessed candidates by asking them to overtake an Assessment Standard on two or more occasions.