



# **NQ Verification 2013–14**

## **Key Message Reports**

<b>Verification group name:</b>	History
<b>Levels</b>	N3 to N5
<b>Date published:</b>	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

Verification group name:	History
Verification event	Event
Date published:	January 2014

#### National Courses/Units/Awards verified:

##### History National 3 Historical Study:

Scottish – H205 73

British – H20C 73

European and World – H20D 73

##### History National 4 Historical Study:

Scottish – H205 74

British – H20C 74

European and World – H20D 74

Added Value Unit – H20E 74

##### History National 5 Historical Study:

Scottish – H205 75, H2V9 75

British – H20C 75

European and World – H20D 75, H2VF 75

## Section 2: Comments on assessment

### Assessment approaches

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

- One centre provided a document giving a clear overview of which assessment prompts had not yet been met; this was very helpful for Verifiers.
- Centres that provided signatures of assessors and Internal Verifiers on each candidate's evidence.
- Centres that provided their internal verification policy and specific checklist for the Unit assessment concerned. This was very helpful for Verifiers in understanding the QA process carried out by the centre.
- A number of centres had successfully amended the Unit assessment support packs to suit the needs of their candidates.
- For the National 4 Added Value assignment, there were some interesting and varied approaches to providing evidence; personalisation and choice.

### Action points:

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

- Some centres need to develop a more secure understanding of the differences between Unit assessment and Course assessment; the purpose of Unit assessment being to assess skills whereas Course assessment aims to assess content and skills. Centres might find it helpful to review their Unit assessment tasks to ensure that these are aimed at gathering evidence of minimum competency in the Assessment Standards.
- Centres should review their assessment tasks to ensure that candidates are being offered personalisation and choice in how they provide evidence to meet the Assessment Standards.
- Centres might find it helpful to review Unit assessment support packs 2 and 3 in order to explore the combined/portfolio approach as a means to reducing the overall assessment burden for candidates.
- Internal verification materials needed more information on QA processes (dates, personnel) and overall internal verification.

## Assessment judgements

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

- Most centres were judging the evidence according to the appropriate Assessment Standard.
- Many centres had good practice in checking assessment judgements, eg blind-marking and cross-marking. In addition, many centres had good practice with respect to the activities of the Internal Verifier who sampled scripts in an agreed manner and recorded the details and decisions from this activity in a simple grid.
- Most centres were correctly entering candidates for the appropriate level.
- There was good practice regarding the clarity of decision-making processes in terms of annotation of scripts and where Assessment Standards had been achieved. This was very helpful for Verifiers in understanding the process that centres had carried out.
- Some centres used feedback from self/peer assessment as alternative sources of evidence for candidates meeting the Assessment Standards. Some centres working with National 3 candidates were very innovative in using peer assessment as the sole means of gathering evidence of meeting Assessment Standards.
- There was good practice from centres which clearly indicated the task/feedback on candidate evidence: this was very helpful for Verifiers.
- For the National 4 Added Value assignment, there was good practice in the use of the assessor grid/comments to provide evidence of candidates meeting the assessment Standard.

### Action points:

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

- Some centres had overestimated the evidence required to meet the Assessment Standard. This means centres are sometimes expecting to see more evidence/explanation than that required to achieve a pass. An example of this would be *Historical Study: Scottish* Assessment Standard 1.1.
- Some centres might consider how they could review all possible sources of evidence for meeting the Assessment Standards before judging pass/fail. This means that centres might explore evidence from work produced in class and/or gather evidence of meeting Assessment Standards orally. When using oral assessment, it is good practice for centres to standardise the question prompts being used and record the outcomes of such conversations on the candidate assessment grid.
- Centres might find it helpful to review Assessment Standards as part of their quality assurance processes prior to making assessment judgements.

## Section 3: General comments

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

- There are many examples of good practice with respect to quality assurance processes. Centres should contact their local area support networks or professional organisations in order to seek examples if they would like more support.
- Centres which are selected for verification should ensure that they have complete copies of the following information: the assessment task; the judging evidence table; specific quality assurance processes for internal verification documentation; candidates' evidence of meeting the Assessment Standards including assessor decisions; evidence (and comments where applicable) of the work done by the Internal Verifier.
- Centres which are selected for verification are advised that where they have assessed Assessment Standards for a Unit, the Unit assessment task and all candidate evidence for meeting those Assessment Standards should be supplied.
- Centres should ensure that they are using the current Unit assessment support packs from SQA's secure website when considering their assessment approaches and judging of evidence.
- Overall, most candidates were well-prepared for Unit assessment and were able to independently meet the Assessment Standards required.



# NQ Verification 2013–14

## Key Messages Round 2

01

### Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	History
Verification event/visiting information	Events 1 & 2
Date published:	March 2014

#### National Courses/Units verified:

##### History National 3 Historical Study:

Scottish – H205 73  
European and World – H20D 73

##### History National 4 Historical Study:

Scottish – H205 74  
British – H20C 74  
European and World – H20D 74

##### Added Value Unit – H20E 74

##### History National 5 Historical Study:

Scottish – H205 75, H2V9 75  
British – H20C 75  
European and World – H20D 75, H2VF 75

## Section 2: Comments on assessment

### Assessment approaches

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed.

A number of centres successfully adapted the Unit assessment support packs to assess candidates at an appropriate level.

Some centres provided internal verification policy and specific checklists for Unit assessments. This was very helpful for verifiers in understanding the quality assurance process carried out by these centres. Some centres had excellent processes for collaborating in devising, assessing and reviewing Unit assessment tasks. Other centres made effective use of local area support networks to assist in their quality assurance, especially where staff absence or single-teacher delivery of the Course occurred. Often, centres that were careful in their quality assurance processes were also consistent and reliable in their assessment judgements.

For the National 4 Added Value Unit, there were some interesting and varied approaches to providing evidence, personalisation and choice.

Some centres had successfully combined assessment standards, thus reducing the number of assessment prompts and overall assessment burden for learners.

Some centres had made effective use of the portfolio approach to maintain the range and variety of active learning opportunities for candidates moving from the broad general education. There were some excellent examples of working with local history for National 4 candidates and the presenting of assessment evidence through visual and audio products for National 4 and National 5.

### Action points:

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

Centres should be aware that as a feature of CfE assessment, candidates should be given opportunities for personalisation and choice in how they provide evidence to meet the assessment standards.

Centres should avoid using one assessment task to gather assessment evidence for National 3, 4 and 5 candidates. This presents issues of equality and inclusion and also inflation of assessment standards. For example, source materials and assessment prompts may be suitable for National 5 candidates but the language may be too complex and confusing for National 3 and National 4.

When planning future assessments, centres may wish to consider including prompts for each Outcome based on the Unit assessment support pack in order to ensure candidates are aware of the minimum standard. This is especially

important where centres combine assessment standards into one assessment task. An example for N5 might be:

*To what extent did the impact of the First World War cause the February Revolution in Russia, 1917? (B1.2, E&W 2.2, E&W2.3, E&W1.2, E&W1.3)*

You should:

- ◆ *identify at least two different factors*
- ◆ *present at least one piece of evidence to support each factor*
- ◆ *present a judgement on which factor was most important*
- ◆ *give a conclusion and explain the reasons why you came to this conclusion*

In adapting source material and assessment prompts from previous SQA exam papers, centres should take care that they do not inflate the assessment standards for National 4 in Unit assessment. Centres should also take care to provide assessors with appropriate guidance on possible candidate responses. An example of this might be:

*From the SQA Standard Grade 2009 General paper:*

**Source A** *is about tenement housing in nineteenth century Dundee.*

#### **Source A**

*Large numbers of workers lived in tenements close to the mill or factory. Dundee had a reputation for poor housing. 70% of houses had one or two rooms. The average number of people living in a home was eight. Families slept in box beds, often sharing four to a bed. Water, supplied from public wells, was often polluted. The addition of toilets on the landing which were shared by many families were a great improvement, but this happened mainly after 1900.*

*Explain why tenement housing was unhealthy for the people living in nineteenth century Scottish towns.*

**4**

The marking instructions for this question would have read:

The candidate explains why living in tenement housing was unhealthy for people living in nineteenth century Scottish towns using presented evidence such as:

- ◆ small houses/overcrowding
- ◆ families sharing beds
- ◆ water was polluted
- ◆ no indoor toilets

and recalled evidence such as:

- ◆ privies emptied directly onto the street were unhygienic

- ◆ poor ventilation led to chest problems
- ◆ little direct sunlight led to problems such as rickets
- ◆ houses were poorly maintained and damp leading to health problems like TB
- ◆ pollution or smog from nearby mills
- ◆ nearby shops sold contaminated foods
- ◆ sewerage/drainage was poor
- ◆ lack of daylight/poor diet caused rickets
- ◆ weak/poorly-enforced planning regulations caused poor living conditions
- ◆ poor facilities for washing clothes led to poor hygiene
- ◆ houses were cheaply built and of a poor standard
- ◆ private landlords did not make repairs
- ◆ street rubbish/middens at back attracted vermin

For the Historical Study N4: British (Unit-by-Unit approach), a suitable assessment prompt might be:

*Explain why tenement housing was unhealthy for the people living in nineteenth century towns. (2.2)*

*You should explain at least one key point why tenement housing was unhealthy for the people living in nineteenth century towns.*

Column 4 of the judging the evidence table for this assessment prompt might read:

In responding to this assessment task prompt, candidates should meet the requirements of Assessment Standard 2.2.

Explain why tenement housing was unhealthy for the people living in nineteenth century towns. (2.2)

You should explain at least one key point why tenement housing was unhealthy for the people living in nineteenth century towns.

Possible answers that would meet the standard would include:

- ◆ Small houses meant that disease could spread more easily.
- ◆ Houses were often overcrowded which caused disease to spread more easily.
- ◆ Water could be polluted which made people more likely to catch disease.
- ◆ No indoor toilets meant disease could spread as human waste was not taken away.

Centres should also take care their guidance for the N4 AVU does not exceed the assessment standards, especially with their advice for choosing a question and the evidence required to meet the assessment standard. An example of this might be asking candidates for an introduction and/or paragraphing.

Some centres need to develop a more secure understanding of the differences between Unit assessment and Course assessment; the purpose of Unit assessment being to assess skills whereas Course assessment aims to assess knowledge and skills. Centres should take care not to conflate Unit assessment standards with Course assessment, especially at N5. Centres should therefore be assiduous in applying the Unit assessment standards detailed in the judging evidence tables. These principles are important for centres when determining the appropriate scope and range of assessments and avoiding being overly severe in their assessment judgements.

Centres are advised that it is not considered good practice to include prelim Course assessments as evidence for Unit assessment. There are some issues with using prelim evidence: it contradicts the written policy as stated in the Unit assessment support packs on timing not being a feature of Unit assessment, thus deviating from appropriate assessment conditions. Secondly, the assessment standards and assessment judgements are matched to Course assessment not Unit assessment, leading to an inflation of evidence expected from candidates. Therefore, while it might, in theory, be possible to gather evidence in this way, it is unlikely to be done so accurately with reference to the assessment standards of Unit assessment.

Some centres have requested further advice on the following assessment standards:

- ◆ N5 Scottish 2.3: Analysing a Scottish historical event or theme
- ◆ N5 British: Presenting information in a structured manner

*N5 Scottish 2.3: Analysing a Scottish historical event or theme*

Candidates should identify components and the relationship between them or draw out and relate the implications of the question. They may examine in detail, to discover meaning, essential features, etc. A possible assessment prompt might be:

- ◆ To what extent did World War 1 (event/theme) impact on Scottish industry (aspect)?

A possible answer would be expected to:

- ◆ explain the way(s) in which the event/theme impacted/changed the aspect in the question
- ◆ come to a conclusion which provides a straightforward judgement which addresses the question

If the candidate's answer includes two or more key points which clearly explain the issue they can achieve also achieve Scottish Outcome 2.2.

### *N5 British: Presenting information in a structured manner*

Information should be organised logically for the purpose of the question.

A possible assessment prompt might be:

- ◆ Identify from the information the positive and negative effects of the railways.

A possible answer would be expected to:

- ◆ select points of information relevant to the positive and negative effects of the railways
- ◆ group the points of information together, organising the points of information on positive effects together and organising the points on negative information together

## **Assessment judgements**

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed.

There was good practice regarding the clarity of decision-making processes in terms of annotation of scripts and where assessment standards had been achieved. This was very helpful for Verifiers in understanding the process that centres had carried out.

The verification process was aided where centres had clearly identified which candidates had not met the specified assessment standard and what arrangements were in place to re-assess those candidates.

Some centres made good use of 'colour coding' to identify each assessment standard.

Most centres were judging the evidence according to the appropriate assessment standard.

### **Action points:**

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

Assessors should keep in mind that it may be possible to find evidence of meeting Assessment Standards 2.1 and 2.2 (Describe, Explain...) across the whole Unit assessment, not just one assessment prompt.

It should be noted that whilst the allocation of marks on Unit assessment might be appropriate in certain circumstances, these should not be used as a method for judging on 'pass/fail' on the Unit assessment. The only criterion which should be used when making this judgement is whether the candidate has provided the required evidence to meet the assessment standards: 'Yes/No'.

Some centres had overestimated the evidence required to meet the assessment standard. This means centres are sometimes expecting to see more evidence/explanation than that required to achieve a pass. An example of this could be where assessors might overlook candidates' use of developed points to meet the assessment standard.

Some centres might consider how they could review all possible sources of evidence for meeting the assessment standards before judging on pass/fail. This means that centres might explore evidence from work produced in class and/or gather evidence of meeting assessment standards orally. When using oral assessment, it is good practice for centres to standardise the question prompts being used and to record the outcomes of such conversations on the candidate assessment grid.

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### **Section 3: General comments**

This report should be read in conjunction with the verification key messages report for History from Round 1. The advice in that document remains valid and is not necessarily duplicated in this Round 2 report.

Centres are again reminded that if they are selected for verification they should ensure that they have complete copies of the following information:

- ◆ the assessment task
- ◆ the judging evidence table
- ◆ specific quality assurance processes for internal verification documentation
- ◆ candidates' evidence of meeting the Assessment Standards including assessor decisions
- ◆ evidence (and comments where applicable) of the work done by the Internal Verifier

Beyond this, there is no additional paperwork required (eg end-of-Unit tests, prelim scripts, etc).

Centres and local authorities will find it very helpful to enlist the help of History nominees in their area for support and guidance. Their expertise will be invaluable for centres seeking to develop their approaches to assessment and the reliability and consistency of assessment decisions.

Once again, most candidates were well-prepared for Unit assessment and were able to independently meet the assessment standards required.



# NQ Verification 2013–14

## Key Messages Round 3

01

### Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	History
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2014

#### National Courses/Units verified:

National 4 Added Value Unit

02

### Section 2: Comments on assessment

Overall, almost all centres followed the process set out in the SQA guidance documents. There were many good examples of creative approaches to assessment. Almost all centres made assessment judgements in line with the national standards. Most candidates achieved the Assessment Standards.

There were many examples of good practice from a wide range of centres in terms of: engaging in and recording discussions with candidates; well-documented evidence of support to candidates in completion of the product; creative approaches by candidates to the product; well-documented evidence of candidate progress through the process.

#### Assessment approaches

The following examples of good practice were observed:

- ◆ There were some very good examples of centres teaching candidates. There were many examples of good practice from a wide range of centres in terms of the choosing and researching of the assignment: engaging in and recording discussions with candidates; well-documented evidence of support to candidates in completion of the assignment; well-documented evidence of candidate progress through the process.

- ◆ Many centres made good use of self-assessment to record progress. Centres that used this approach were also meticulous in the candidate and assessor counter-signing the evidence.
- ◆ There were some excellent examples of creative presentation of the assignment, especially visual and digital media.

There were some very good examples of centres teaching candidates the skills required for successful completion of the Added Value Unit and providing skills practice before completion of it.

### **Action points**

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

- ◆ Assessment Standard 1.1: some centres could provide more explicit evidence of discussions with respect to the choosing of the assignment issue. Also, some centres should review their advice to candidates and give them more choice in selecting a question on either the causes or the impact of a historical theme or event. Furthermore, some centres need to review the advice in the Unit assessment support pack on making assessment judgements. This advice contains guidance on possible question styles suitable for National 4. Some centres had disadvantaged their candidates by adopting questions derived from Course assessment at National 5, Higher and even Advanced Higher.
- ◆ Some centres may wish to consider including success criteria on candidate progress records/booklets to clarify the task for candidates.
- ◆ Assessment Standard 1.3: this assessment standard requires candidates to demonstrate the ability to organise information in a logical and coherent order. Centres should take care to ensure that planning templates are not overly prescriptive, allowing the candidate to demonstrate the capacity to organise their own information.
- ◆ Assessment Standards 1.4 and 1.5: these Assessment Standards relate to the content of the assignment. Some centres need to offer more support to candidates to ensure that the selected information correlates to the historical theme or event chosen by the candidate.

### **Assessment judgements**

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

- ◆ Centres had clearly identified where candidates had achieved specified Assessment Standards, eg by annotation, often colour-coded to indicate cross-marking.

### **Action points**

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

- ◆ Centres should review the evidence required to meet Assessment Standards 1.4 and 1.5 and support candidates in making sure the evidence is clearly indicated.

- ◆ Centres should review the evidence required to meet Assessment Standard 1.6. It should be noted that the candidate should include some statements that indicate a summing-up of the question/issue. These need not be in the form of a conclusion nor at the end of the assignment.
- ◆ When completing candidate assessment sheets, centres should include a brief description of how the candidate resulted in a pass or fail rather than simply entering the result.
- ◆ Centres should use annotated marking to indicate when evidence is being credited to meet Assessment Standards, eg 1.4 or 1.5. By doing so, centres will greatly enhance their internal verification processes.

03

### **Section 3: General comments**

Centres are reminded that if they are selected for Round 3 verification they should ensure that they follow the guidance issued in National 4 Added Value Unit assessment H20E 74 as this is the only valid method approach to assessment.

Some of the evidence submitted was from candidates who were clearly being entered for National 5. If candidates have completed National 5 assignments, there is no requirement to submit evidence for National 4 assignments in Round 3.