



NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Message Reports

Verification group name:	Modern Languages — Urdu
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:	Modern Languages — Urdu
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	February 2016

National Courses/Units verified:

H26X 76 Higher Urdu: Using Language

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The approach to assessment used by centres that were selected for verification were all Accepted or Accepted with Recommendations (Accepted*). All centres sampled in round 1 used the SQA Unit assessment support packs (UASPs).

When using Unit assessment support packs, centres are reminded that a more up-to-date version of the approach may be available online (SQA Secure).

It is encouraging to note that centres indicated clearly which Unit assessment support pack they used, eg Package 1, National 5, Reading. It is helpful if a copy of the judging evidence table and the texts (and transcripts for listening tasks) are also included for the whole sample. There is no need to include a copy inside each candidate's evidence envelope.

Centres may wish to reformat the approach to assessment provided in the Unit assessment support packs by slightly amending the questions, texts or layout to suit their candidates' needs while maintaining the standards.

Assessment judgements

The majority of the assessment judgements made by assessors were 'Accepted'. Where the assessment judgements for centres have been accepted, centres provided evidence in the form of judging evidence tables or centre-devised documents which provided a note of acceptable answers. In addition, the majority of centres also provided evidence of how assessment judgements had been made in relation to the different Assessment Standards, eg 1.1 and 1.2 in Reading.

Some centres noted each Assessment Standard next to each of the candidates' responses or on their scripts as 1.1, 1.2 etc. to evidence where the candidates had addressed these Assessment Standards. This is good practice as it is very useful for internal and external verification purposes. It is encouraging to note that all centres verified took a holistic and positive approach to marking candidate work and no centres applied marks on any scripts. Centres should note that it is particularly helpful to nominee verifiers to have a candidate assessment record (provided in SQA UASPs) annotated with the reasoning behind decisions to pass or fail Assessment Standards and an Outcome.

Centres should amend judging evidence tables found in the UASPs to include a range of possible answers to demonstrate how assessment judgements are made for each Assessment Standard. Centres are advised to include all acceptable answers against the Assessment Standards in the one document (judging evidence table or equivalent) since this allows nominee verifiers to understand how assessment judgements have been made.

A candidate should be given credit for answers as 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.

For Assessment Standard 1.1 in Higher (reading), centres are advised to encourage candidates to provide an explanation for the overall purpose with reference to the text. Where the overall purpose question asks for examples, candidates should be encouraged to provide specific information from the text in English. For example, *'the text promotes studying abroad because only young people from rich families could study abroad before, but now there are lots of alternatives for people to study abroad.'*

In relation to the Unit talking assessment, if a centre would like SQA to give more extensive feedback, audio recordings would ensure a more detailed and accurate comment.

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.

In line with SQA verification guidance, if a centre is presenting candidates at National 3 to Advanced Higher, the SQA will notify the centre which levels will be verified: **either** National 3–5 **or** Higher and Advanced Higher.

- ◆ If the centre is presenting three levels (National 3, 4 and 5), a centre should submit a sample of 18 candidates split evenly between the three levels.
- ◆ If the centre is presenting at only two levels, a centre should submit a sample of 12 candidates split evenly between the two levels.
- ◆ If presenting at one level, a centre should submit a sample of 12 candidates at the one level.

If a candidate has assessments for the same Unit (eg a reading assessment and a listening assessment completing the Understanding Language Unit), then both may be submitted for verification. If a combined approach has been used, only one assessment per candidate should be included in the sample.

Centres are requested to complete the Candidate Evidence Flyleaf. It would be useful for the centre to indicate whether the centre agrees to give SQA permission to use candidate evidence for Understanding Standards materials.

Centres are reminded they should complete the Verification Sample Form to indicate which Unit(s) and level(s) were used to assess the candidates. It should also provide the overall pass/fail judgement for each candidate.

All centres included evidence of internal verification. Examples of good internal verification highlighted how some centres had quality assured the reliability of the application of the judging evidence. 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, the centre could refer to the [Internal Verification Toolkit](#).



NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Messages Round 2

01

Section 1: Verification group information

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

National Courses/Units verified:

X770 75 National 5 Performance: talking
X770 76 Higher Performance: talking
(Internally assessed component of course assessment)

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Two centres were verified in this round and both of the centres used SQA's guidelines for the Higher internally assessed component of course assessment — Performance: talking.

The quality of the performances at National 5 for both of the centres was generally good. The candidates were guided by the assessors to choose a variety of the topics to enable them to demonstrate a suitable range of structures and vocabulary appropriate to this level.

Centres are reminded that topics such as 'myself and my family' are not appropriate to Higher because this type of topic restricts the candidate's ability to demonstrate the detailed and complex language required at this level. Sometimes the topics chosen at National 5 are not appropriate at Higher and assessors must encourage candidates to choose a variety of topics from different contexts.

Centres are reminded that they should check the quality of the audio recording of the performance and that recordings are playable. Recording from one centre for some candidates had loud background noise. The microphone seemed far away from the candidates, which made it difficult to hear them clearly.

Presentation section of the performance

Most of the performances were appropriate to National 5 and Higher and were within the time limit. However, some of the presentations dragged on too long and some of the candidates did not reach the minimum time limit required.

Centres should refer to the *Modern Languages Performance: talking General assessment information* document for information regarding the recommended length of time the presentation should last.

Conversation section of the performance

Interlocutors asked a good range of open-ended questions to elicit detailed answers from most of the candidates, but some performances sounded rather rehearsed. Interlocutors were mostly supportive of their candidates and prompted them, as appropriate, during the conversation.

A few conversations were either unnecessarily prolonged or too short, which does not help the candidate. SQA's guidelines on time must be followed and can be found in the *Modern Languages Performance: talking General assessment information* document.

Assessment judgements

Overall, the quality of candidate performance was high and indeed some performances went beyond the standards expected at National 5 and Higher.

Both the centres verified had applied the marking instructions for the performance in talking accurately and in line with national standards.

One of the centres provided brief commentaries to demonstrate how they made the assessment judgement, which was helpful for the nominee verifiers. This is also useful for internal verifiers and promotes constructive professional dialogue. The other centre did not provide any comments on the assessment judgement for their candidates.

Centres are encouraged to provide brief information about how they made their assessment judgements for all candidates submitted in the sample. Evidence of dialogue between the assessor and the internal verifier and final decision is very useful.

Sustaining the conversation/performance section

There was some inconsistency in the application of the marking instructions and some were too severe (eg candidates awarded full marks and other candidates awarded 3 marks for performances of an equal standard). Centres are reminded that candidates do not have to ask a question in the conversation to achieve 5 marks for this section. Centres are also reminded that the 5 mark section applies to the conversation as a whole and not to a candidate's ability to answer unpredictable or specific questions.

Section 3: General comments

Both of the centres verified showed good practice, as they provided a breakdown of the marks and their candidate materials were well-organised.

However, they did not submit evidence of internal verification for talking performances or provide any detail on the candidate assessment record, of why candidates were awarded one pegged mark rather than another.

Centres are advised to submit evidence of internal verification and to refer to SQA's Internal Verification Toolkit available at www.sqa.org.uk/IVtoolkit