NQ verification 2022–23 round 1

Qualification verification summary report

Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	History
Verification activity:	Event
Date published:	April 2023

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H20D 73	National 3	Historical Study: European and World
H205 73	National 3	Historical Study: Scottish
H20C 73	National 3	Historical Study: British
H20D 74	National 4	Historical Study: European and World
H205 74	National 4	Historical Study: Scottish
H20C 74	National 4	Historical Study: British

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Most centres successfully followed the guidelines to assessment at both National 3 and National 4 levels, as set out in the SQA unit assessment support packs. Many had suitably adapted assessments to suit the needs of their centre. Centres are reminded to clearly state the nature of the assessment being used, whether this is centre-devised or adapted from an SQA-generated unit assessment support pack, or include the prior verification certificate for the assessment used. Centres effectively used suitable question stems, assessment structure, and judging evidence tables in devising assessments, with more common use of candidate-style responses to exemplify to markers what candidates may write, and how they may write it.

There was some evidence of personalisation and choice, particularly in the Scottish unit at National 4. This invited candidate responses that included effective use of local history. Some assessments hampered the breadth of knowledge a candidate could use by including a source with the question when assessing assessment standards 2.1 and 2.2.

Centres are advised to use the wording of question stems in the unit assessment support packs to avoid altering or inflating demands on candidates. Several instruments of assessment inflated demands for National 3 and/or National 4 candidates by using National 5 approaches and sources.

Centres are encouraged to include the checklist for verification with their submissions and to make use of the candidate assessment record which is invaluable for recording discussions regarding assessment judgements made for each candidate.

Centres should ensure that if an assessment refers to sources in a textbook or online sources, copies of these sources are included with the materials for verification in order for the review process to take place. Assessments should provide candidates with the opportunity to meet all assessment standards, despite the threshold for a unit pass overall at National 4 being a pass of four out of five assessment standards for the Scottish unit, and three out of four for both the British and European and World units.

Centres are reminded that the current version of unit assessment support packs on SQA's secure site should always be used as these are subject to revision. These can be accessed through SQA co-ordinators at each centre.

Assessment judgements

Centres should be commended on some excellent, well defined internal verification, which showed clear processes adopted in making assessment judgements.

Most centres made effective use of candidate assessment records to exemplify evidence and results, demonstrating effective cross-marking. There was good evidence of internal verification processes shown by different markers having annotated in different coloured pens at the point of achievement, aiding discussion in making assessment judgements. Centres should be encouraged to demonstrate clear evidence of cross-marking throughout a candidate response rather than annotating the top of the paper alone. Assessors should continue to mark all candidate evidence — even after the point at which assessment standards are achieved. Most centres exemplified the good practice of annotating assessment standards met by candidates specifically at the point of achievement.

Centres are reminded that at National 4 a candidate is deemed to have achieved a pass overall when three out of four assessment standards have been met in the British and the European and World units, and when four out of five assessment standards have been met in the Scottish unit. This is specified on page 4 of each of the unit specification documents. National 3 candidates must pass all assessment standards for a pass overall.

Centres are encouraged to make full use of oral re-assessment in this regard, and in general terms, and should record clearly when a candidate has met assessment standards as a result of this process.

More centres had suitably adapted the judging evidence tables to show possible candidate prose to exemplify possible knowledge. It would be helpful to include full exemplification of responses in column four to aid assessors in judging if national standards have been met.

Points to note for National 4 British assessment standard 1.1 is that a small number of centres had credited candidates when the candidate had not put the information into their own words. Good practice was evident where markers underlined or highlighted the changes made to the source point by the candidate to identify where they had used their own words. For National 4 British assessment standard 1.2, there was overinflation of demands as some centre-devised assessments required candidates to organise more pieces of information than was required to meet the assessment standard. Both assessment standards 1.1 and 1.2 can be achieved in the same task.

For National 3 assessment standard 2.2, candidates should make a valid connection between the point of knowledge and the causal relationship. For example, in explaining why Scots enlisted in the First World War, a candidate might explain that one reason was due to the attraction of the unofficial Pals Battalions. The causal relationship would not be effectively shown if the candidate said this was because they 'believed the war would be over by Christmas', rather they should say 'they wanted to serve with their friends'. The connections should be clear and appropriate.

Section 3: general comments

The overall quality of submissions was of a high standard with centres clearly responding to advice given previously. Cross-centre support and collaboration was commendable.

Centres should be commended on holding purposeful pre-delivery meetings, which agreed a sample for internal verification. There was good evidence of discussions between markers within centres, indicated by candidate assessment records and internal verification policies being embedded in practice. There was evidence of post-assessment reviews by centres, which specified actions to be taken based on both candidate and marker reflections of the process, for example, identifying when to reword questions in assessments to improve clarity.

Centres had successfully adapted SQA unit assessment support packs to identify where assessment standards could be met by candidates to aid candidates and assessors. There was effective evidence of candidates being re-assessed. Centres have increasingly used oral re-assessment, and centres have recorded good evidence of when assessment standards were to be re-assessed. Several centres did not submit the instrument of assessment with their candidate responses for verification.

Overall, centres should be commended for their effective completion of the assessment process and their ongoing support and encouragement of their candidates. This support was exemplified by thorough and constructive feedback on candidate responses.