NQ Verification 2016–17
Key Messages Round 2

01 Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Administration & IT
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2017

National Courses/Units verified:

Unit code	Level	Unit Title
H201	74	Administration and IT Assignment (National 4)

02 Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The approaches to assessment used by all centres verified were valid. All centres used SQA Unit Assessment Support Packs (UASPs) appropriately.

Across the centres sampled, all three packs were used: Island Secondary School, Youth Beat, and Eagle Eye. Youth Beat and Eagle Eye were used significantly more than Island Secondary School.

The following examples of good practice were observed:

- Many centres had a strong internal verification policy: documenting their approach to assessment; indicating relevant department meetings; collegiate working with nominees, etc.

- Many centres demonstrated good practice in their internal verification processes: evidence of cross-marking; use of different-coloured pens to

annotate scripts; cross-marking initialled by the assessor and internal verifier; large sample sizes.

- Candidate evidence from many centres was well presented, tasks were clearly labelled, and assessment approaches were included along with the Judging Evidence Table.

- Some centres used a second UASP for re-assessment. Where a candidate had failed on their first attempt to pass an assessment standard, the candidate had been reassessed using the relevant tasks from another pack to allow them a second chance to achieve the assessment standard.

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

- Centres should be aware of Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres offering SQA Qualifications (February 2011).

- All centres should be using the most up-to-date version of the UASP.

Assessment judgements

There has been a significant improvement in the accuracy of the assessment judgements since Year 1, particularly in relation to judging functional skills.

The following examples of good practice were observed:

- Centres had clearly identified the specific point on candidate evidence where the candidate had actioned an instruction and in the achievement of an assessment standards, eg by annotation, often colour-coded to indicate cross-marking.

- A number of centres were thorough in identifying and underlining all keyboarding errors on candidate printouts.

- Many centres supported their assessment judgements with appropriate assessor comments on the candidate evidence or record sheet.

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

Annotation

Assessors should ensure that they annotate candidate evidence at the point of achievement or non-achievement of an instruction in, or requirement of, the task (a simple ✓ or x is sufficient). This will help ensure consistent and reliable assessment judgements in line with national assessment standards, and will greatly facilitate both internal and external verification.

Error tolerance

Assessors must underline every keyboarding and spacing error within a task. These must be counted up, and candidates should only be recorded as a pass if they are within the tolerance for that task — the error tolerance for N4 is one error for every 15 words.

Errors can appear anywhere in the task. Errors included in the tolerance are typos, minor layout errors (reference and date in wrong place) and spacing errors (eg inconsistent/inaccurate spacing between paragraphs, inconsistent/inaccurate spacing in a letter layout). There is flexibility over layouts, but a sensible business layout should be used.

Common errors to be aware of:

- inconsistent date formats within a task (see ‘Date format’ section below)
- formatting punctuation
- inappropriate punctuation
- confusion between a dash and a hyphen (this counts as one error across the task)
- inconsistent capitalisation (this counts as one error across the task)
- no space after a colon (this counts as one error across the task)
- task numbers included, eg as the database report title
- inaccurate punctuation in e-mail messages, eg commas after Hi or Kind Regards (this counts as one error across the task)

It is crucial that assessors identify all errors to ensure they correctly judge whether the candidate is within the error tolerance or not, therefore ensuring the candidate is correctly recorded as a Pass or Fail for the assessment standard.

Date format

If a task requires a date, candidates must **always** include the year, or else this is counted as one keyboarding error across a task. Acceptable date formats are:

7 May 2017	07/05/2017
7th May 2017	May 7 2017
7/5/17	
Do Not Accept ‘the 7th of May 2017’	

Consistency within a document is essential. If candidates have more than one date format within a document, this must be underlined and counted as one keyboarding error.

If an e-file given to a candidate has a date stated, candidates should continue to use the same date format. Otherwise, the date format is inconsistent and is counted as one keyboarding error.

E-diary entries

If the printout of the view requested in the task truncates a recorded event, an extra printout of the event must be provided, so that keyboarding and exact times can be checked. A screenshot is acceptable, so long as it is clear from the screen shot that an e-diary has been used.

Formatting

If a task requires the candidate to apply two or more formats, any of the formatting options listed below should be accepted (as long as they are not already present in the original e-file):

Size	Bold	Centring
Underline	Italics	Borders
Shading	Colour	Justification
Font change*	Right alignment	Bullet points
Word Art	Text within a shape	
* unless change of font is asked for separately		

Spreadsheet formulae

The SUM function should only be used when adding, and should add a range of cells, eg =sum(B3:B4). It should not be used for subtraction, multiplication or division.

If a candidate uses the SUM function incorrectly, this should not be accepted and the candidate has therefore not achieved the corresponding Assessment Standard.

03 Section 3: General comments

All centres had successfully followed an Admin & IT Assignment (National 4) Added Value Unit assessment support pack.

Almost all centres made assessment judgements in line with national assessment standards. However, identifying keyboarding errors is still an area for improvement for most centres.

Most candidates had been entered at the appropriate level and were successful in achieving their National 4 Added Value Unit.

All centres are encouraged to make use of their local authority Nominee(s) for extra help, advice and support. Nominees have received extensive Understanding Standards training and are a valuable resource in your authority for you to make use of.