



NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Messages Round 2

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Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Art & Design
Verification event/visiting information	Visiting
Date published:	June 2016

National Courses/Units verified:

H204 National 4 Added value unit

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Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The added value unit has two outcomes: Outcome 1 Expressive; and Outcome 2 Design. The majority of centres had a clearer understanding of the purpose and requirements demanded by the units. No centres chose to develop their own or significantly alter the unit assessment support packs and therefore the prior verification service was not required. In Art and Design, centres continued to use the published unit assessment support packs because they can choose their own context unlike other subjects where the task is specified.

Centres are clearly referring to the judging evidence tables in the unit assessment support packs and are working directly from these. Centres that have delivered the National 4 added value unit previously were able to meet unit requirements more quickly than in previous years. Work also tended to be more focused and relevant. In many cases, those centres delivering this unit for the second time encouraged candidates to produce highly detailed development work which exceeded requirements. The main reason for this is that often National 4 and National 5 candidates are being taught together in multi-level classes and working in a similar way. There is no issue with candidates exceeding minimum requirements; however, it is important to remember that for National 4, candidates are required to show planning for assessment standards 1.2 and 2.2. This can be a simple written description of their intentions for the final piece, annotated simple sketch/sketches, mind maps or a combination of all of these.

Outcomes 1 and 2

For both Expressive and Design final art/design work demonstrated a wide range of themes, choices of media and techniques. In the majority of cases, candidates were easily exceeding the minimum standard for National 4. Clearly they had built on the experience gained within the National 4 Expressive and Design units. It was noted that in a number of centres the quantity of evidence produced exceeded minimum requirements at National 4.

The main reason for this was that centres considered some candidates to have the ability to produce artwork that would meet the standard for National 5 but that they were not likely to be able to pass the question paper element. In a number of such cases, candidates were achieving passes in one or both units at National 5 but were being presented for the National 4 added value unit in order to gain a National 4 course award.

For outcomes 1 and 2, centres were allowing candidates to experiment with a wide variety of different materials and techniques to inspire, engage and motivate candidates. This allowed candidates to be experimental, especially with regards to the planning stage of the added value unit. Although centres were meeting the minimum requirements more quickly, some centres are choosing to produce over and above the minimum requirements. This is not an issue as long as candidates meet the minimum requirements and the national standard for National 4, then work can be marked as a pass.

For outcome 2, design sketches showed thorough consideration of function and evaluations clearly linked to the candidates' design briefs making the added value unit flow and show coherence.

Genres/themes

It was evident that in most centres candidates exercised choice and personal engagement in their individual themes and use of materials and techniques. The range of themes for the Expressive outcome was similar to those at other levels. The most common themes were portraiture and still-life. These often demonstrated individuality in content and a number of centres commented that candidates were more engaged with their work as a result of personalisation and choice. For the Design outcome the most common themes tended to be graphics, fashion/textiles, jewellery and product design.

Areas of misunderstanding

At the planning stage for outcomes 1 and 2 a small number of candidates had produced purely descriptive/reflective comments merely describing what they had done. At this stage candidates should be identifying and planning how they plan to develop their art and design works. This should be completed in future tense.

Assessment judgements

The majority of centres were correctly entering candidates for the appropriate level. On a whole centres had an excellent understanding of the national standards across all levels. In this round all centres were either 'accepted' or

‘accepted*’ in comparison to previous years where a small number of centres were ‘not accepted’. This is due to centres having a clearer understanding of what is required and expected. Nominee training and Understanding Standards events have also helped to cascade and share good practice across all sectors. On the whole, centres are confident in the national standards, what the minimum requirements are, and making assessment judgements.

A large number of candidates had clearly identified starting points from their unit work and continuity was evident in their final art/design works from earlier development and planning stages. Candidates were encouraged to reflect and evaluate on their final art and design works and they identified clearly areas that were successful and areas that were less successful rather than using purely descriptive language. Candidates were encouraged to use higher order thinking skills.

A large number of centres/candidates made good use of ICT/Photoshop within outcome 2 for Design; this engaged learners.

There was evidence of many centres working with others in their authorities to sample and cross-mark. This is proving to be helpful in maintaining, sustaining and applying national standards across all levels. Various systems of internal verification have been developed by centres and are increasingly being seen as integral to the effective delivery of units. There was evidence of dual assessment, cross-marking and sampling throughout centres. Unit work was reviewed regularly with candidates being given clear feedback at each stage. Comments from assessors were clear, encouraging, relevant and helpful. Records to support assessment took a variety of forms including departmental minutes, spreadsheets and quality assurance calendars with key dates.

Most centres used individual record-of-work booklets/sheets for candidates with a simple checklist outlining each assessment standard for both outcomes. This could then be ticked when each assessment standard was achieved. Some centres had developed their own assessment sheets, while some used the SQA assessment/record sheets. Other centres chose to use digital diaries to record pupil progress, all of which were acceptable. Student logs were also used to highlight next steps and learning targets for improvement.

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Section 3: General comments

The aims of verification are to ensure standards are maintained, to share knowledge about the national standards, to support centres and increase centres’ confidence in making assessment decisions.

- ◆ Round 2 is verification of the National 4 added value unit only.
- ◆ Round 2 runs from March 2016 until May 2016.
- ◆ The sample size is 12.
- ◆ Centres can choose which candidates they put forward for verification within the level that is being verified.

- ◆ If a centre is presenting at one level and there are fewer than 12 candidates, then evidence for all candidates at that level should be provided.
- ◆ The National 4 added value unit is one unit with two outcomes: Expressive and Design.
- ◆ Complete or interim evidence can be used for verification; however, the work must have been assessed — passed or failed — at a minimum of one assessment standard.
- ◆ Work does not need to be mounted but should be neatly laid out for verification and preferably labelled with which assessment standard has been passed.
- ◆ The verifier will look at all relevant paperwork — including the internal verification policy, assessment sheets, unit assessment support packs and all available evidence.
- ◆ Evidence can be paper or electronic or both.
- ◆ The verifier will look at the centre's approach to assessment — students should be doing work that enables them to achieve the assessment standards stated in the unit assessment support packs.
- ◆ The verifier will look at the assessment judgements made by the centre — whether they meet the national standards and the minimum standards and outcomes that are stated in unit assessment support packs.
- ◆ All units are assessed, passed or failed by centres and are subject to external verification.
- ◆ The standards remain the same from previous qualifications — the national standards have not changed.
- ◆ Centres should assess a candidate's work and keep a record of this with which assessment standard the candidate has passed or failed. This evidence is kept and made available for external verification.
- ◆ Verification focuses on the centre's approach to assessment and the centre's assessment judgements — are they reliable and valid and in line with the national standards.
- ◆ Verifiers only look at unit work and not course assessment work.
- ◆ Centres should **not** send units along with course assessment work for external marking.
- ◆ All unit evidence should be kept by the centre until 31 July each year.
- ◆ The verification process is fully supportive and centres found the process to be very helpful and beneficial.
- ◆ The Understanding Standards link for internally assessed Art and Design unit exemplars is: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45707.html>. (Click on: Art and Design event presentations.)