NQ Verification 2017–18
Key Messages Round 1

01 ▶ Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Art and Design
Verification event/visiting information	Visiting
Date published:	March 2018

National Courses/Units verified:

H202 Art and Design: Expressive Activity (National 3, 4 and SCQF level 5)
H204 Art and Design: Design Activity (National 3, 4 and SCQF level 5)
H202 Art and Design: Expressive Activity (Higher)
H204 Art and Design: Design Activity (Higher and Advanced Higher — Studies or Enquiry)

02 ▶ Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The vast majority of centres chose to follow a unit-by-unit approach, with very few centres choosing to follow the portfolio approach. A unit-by-unit approach allows for a structured approach which seems to be favoured by centres.

The vast majority of centres had a clear understanding of the requirements demanded by the units. No centre chose to develop their own or significantly alter the unit assessment support packs (UASPs) and therefore the prior verification service was not required. In Art and Design, centres tended to continue to use the published UASPs as they allow candidates to choose their own context unlike other subjects where the task is specified.

Centres are clearly referring to the judging evidence tables in the UASPs and are working directly from these. On the whole, centres were able to meet the requirements due to prior knowledge and understanding of units. Previous SQA nominee training events and exemplars published on SQA's website have clearly supported centres with unit requirements.

Various networking approaches and opportunities used by centres have clearly supported them with unit requirements. Work tended to be focused and relevant. Many centres used sketchbooks which demonstrated highly effective integration

of written and practical work. Some centres chose to record the written element of the unit in a PowerPoint presentation which was a successful approach. Some centres created highly focused resources to assist candidates with meeting the requirements of outcome 1 and the unit evaluation.

National 3 to Higher

There was evidence of many centres encouraging candidates to investigate artists and designers without being restricted to a particular style or genre. This was in keeping with the question papers at National 5 and Higher and allowed candidates to develop a broad awareness of artists and designers.

Many candidates were selecting artists and designers of personal interest to them and relevant to their practical work. The most effective examples had outcomes 1 and 2 delivered almost concurrently. This allowed candidates to gather a more meaningful understanding of their artists and designers and also supported and underpinned the candidates' practical work.

Some centres were delivering and completing outcome 1 first and then relating their artists and designers to their practical folios. It was evident that departments had devised appropriate prompts and resources for outcome 1.

Advanced Higher

For the Advanced Higher course, candidates will choose either to study Expressive Studies and Expressive Enquiry or Design Studies and Design Enquiry. Some centres chose to record this evidence in a sketchbook format. There was clear evidence of personal engagement by the candidates in their individual themes and use of different materials and techniques. Unit work for the Advanced Higher showed exciting examples and explored a wide range of media and techniques appropriate to the themes selected. Due to the nature of the Advanced Higher course some candidate evidence met more than one assessment standard. The course allows candidates to take various directions allowing for fluidity and flexibility of approach as it is not as linear as other levels. For Advanced Higher, candidates were also encouraged to investigate a wide variety of different designers, again without restricting them to any specific style or genre.

Areas of misunderstanding — all levels

Centres should be aware that at National 4, SCQF level 5 and Higher, in the Expressive Activity and in the Design Activity, outcome 1 requires the candidates to provide assessment evidence of the following:

♦ two artists and two designers respectively, and one piece of work by each artist and designer

At National 3 however, candidates are required to provide assessment evidence of the following:

♦ one piece of work by only one artist and one design by only one designer

Media and techniques — all levels

Centres encouraged candidates to experiment with a wide variety of different materials, media and techniques. This allowed candidates to be experimental especially with regards to the development stage. In outcome 2 for National 3 to Higher there were no issues with candidates using a minimum of two different types of media and techniques.

Genres/themes — all levels

It was evident that, in most centres, candidates exercised choice in their selection of artists/designers and art/design works to address the requirements. This personalisation and choice allowed the candidates to identify and study suitable art/design works which would inform and support their practical work. There was clear evidence of personal engagement by the candidates in their individual themes and use of materials and techniques. Common genres for Expressive tended to be: still life and portraiture although there were some excellent examples of landscape and seascape. Common genres for design tended to be: body adornment and jewellery although there were some very good examples of architecture and product. Traditional media and, with increasing frequency, digital photography, were used to explore composition. Candidates have been encouraged to explore and vary the scale of their investigative and compositional studies within their Expressive units.

Areas of strength/examples of good practice — all levels

The use of clearly considered design briefs helped candidates engage thoroughly in the design process and personalisation and choice led to higher quality work. The sketchbook approach to the unit work was well utilised by candidates allowing them to keep a clear record of their progress through the unit and make connections between written and practical work. The variety of 2D and 3D work being produced for unit work showed breadth of teaching approaches. Structured resources for the written aspects of the unit have clearly been developed by centres to support candidates. There is evidence of peer assessment/evaluation which develops ownership of learning, adding value to the process. Some centres are linking unit work to local imagery and galleries, and are utilising resources to explore possible career paths.

Assessment judgements — all levels

The majority of centres were correctly entering candidates for the appropriate level. On the whole, centres had an excellent understanding of the national standards across all levels. In this round all centres were either 'accepted' or 'accepted*'. This is due to centres having a clearer understanding of what is

required and expected. Recent Understanding Standards events have also helped to cascade and share good practice across all sectors.

Overall, it is clear centres are confident with regards to the national standards, what the requirements are, and making assessment judgements. In terms of the centres that were 'accepted*' this came down to one of two areas and sometimes both. Primarily, it was an understanding of the standard required for each unit/s. Secondly, it was an understanding of the minimum requirements for each unit/s.

There was clear evidence of many centres working with others in their authorities to sample and cross-mark. This is proving to be helpful in maintaining 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 and for quality assurance purposes. 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 and 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. Best practice was an integrated approach throughout the centre. A whole-school verification policy was used to record all aspects of verification: from centre staff agreeing timelines, using benchmarks to appropriately apply assessment standards, through to the documentation of internal verification relating to the associated UASP.

Almost all centres used individual record-of-work booklets/sheets for candidates with a simple checklist outlining each assessment standard from the outcomes. This could then be ticked off when each assessment standard was achieved. Some centres had developed their own assessment sheets; other centres used the SQA assessment/record sheets from the UASPs. Both of which were acceptable.

03 ▶ 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 to increase centres' confidence in making assessment decisions.

♦ Round 1 in 2018 ran for the full month of February 2018 (National 3 to Advanced Higher units).

♦ For round 1, centres were selected for either levels 3 to 5 or H to AH. The sample was 6 candidates at each level. Therefore, if centres were selected for levels 3 to 5, the sample size was 18. Centres presenting candidates at both Higher and Advanced Higher needed to prepare a sample of evidence for 12 candidates, split evenly between the two levels.

♦ Levels 1 and 2 are not part of the Art and Design verification process. Centres selected for these levels will be part of a separate verification.

- 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.

- If a centre is presenting at two levels and there are fewer than 6 candidates at any level, evidence for all candidates at that level should be provided. Where possible, evidence for additional candidates should be provided at the other level to make up an overall sample of 12 candidates.

- If a centre is presenting at three levels and there are fewer than 6 candidates at one of the levels, but at least 12 candidates overall, then no further candidate evidence is required.

- SQA will choose what levels a centre is verified for — however, the centre itself chooses which unit for the specific level they put forward for verification and which candidate/s work will be verified.

- For round 1, units will be Design or Expressive but not split between levels, eg 6 × N3 Expressive, 6 × N4 Design and 6 × SCQF5 Design.

- For verification to take place, all candidates must have been assessed, pass or fail, for at least one assessment standard.

- All evidence can be interim or complete.

- Work does not need to be mounted but neatly laid out and preferably labelled with each assessment standard that is to be verified.

- The verifier will look at all relevant paperwork — including the internal verification policy, assessment sheets, UASPs and all available evidence.

- Evidence can be paper or electronic or a mixture of both.

- When a centre has verbal evidence for an assessment standard, this must be recorded in a suitable way — transcribed, recorded, etc.

- The verifier will look at the centre's approach to assessment — candidates should be doing work that enables them to achieve the assessment standards stated in the UASPs.

- The verifier will look at the assessment judgements made by the centre — do they meet the national standards and have they met the minimum standards and outcomes that are stated in UASPs?

- 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 will assess a candidate's work and will keep a record of this with what 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 will only look at unit work and not course assessment work.

- All unit evidence should be kept by the centre until 31 July of each year.

- The verification process is fully supportive and centres found the process to be very helpful and beneficial.

♦ Internal verification documentation and evidence should be made available for the visit.

Useful links

[Internally-assessed Art and Design unit exemplars](#)
(Look under the Art and Design Event
Presentations tab)

The SQA Internal Verification Toolkit: www.sqa.org.uk/IVtoolkit

[Art and Design updates](#)
(Look under the Subject Updates tab)