

# NQ Verification 2016–17

## Key Messages Round 1

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### Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Art & Design
Verification event/visiting information	Visiting
Date published:	March 2017

#### National Courses/Units verified:

H202 Art and Design: Expressive Activity (National 3, 4 and 5)

H204 Art and Design: Design Activity (National 3, 4 and 5)

H202 Art and Design: Expressive Activity (Higher and Advanced Higher — Studies or Enquiry)

H204 Art and Design: Design Activity (Higher and Advanced Higher — Studies or Enquiry)

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### Section 2: Comments on assessment

#### Assessment approaches

The majority of centres chose to follow a unit-by-unit approach. Some centres chose to follow the portfolio approach for Advanced Higher; this allowed candidates to work in a much looser and more experimental way. The evidence tended to be more naturally occurring when following this approach.

The vast majority of centres had a clearer understanding of the purpose and 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 can already 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 more quickly than in previous years due to the UASP updates and also from having prior knowledge and understanding of units. SQA nominee training events and exemplars published on SQA's website have also helped

centres with unit requirements. Work also tended to be more focused and relevant. Many centres used sketchbooks which demonstrated a highly effective integration of written and practical work. Some centres chose to record the written element of the unit in a PowerPoint presentation; this too was also successful.

### **Outcome 1 — 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 informed 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. A large number of 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 huge range of media and techniques. Due to the nature of the Advanced Higher course some candidate evidence met more than one assessment standard. The course itself is fluid and flexible in nature and perhaps not as linear in approach in comparison to other levels. For Advanced Higher, candidates were also encouraged to investigate a wide variety of different artists and designers again without restricting them to any particular style or genre. For example, an Advanced Higher candidate could be studying jewellery design but be looking at an architect for inspiration.

### **Areas of misunderstanding — all levels**

Centres should be aware that at National 4, National 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

For outcome 2 for National 3 to Higher the word 'minimum' has been taken out in order to reduce workload.

The UASPs for the Advanced Higher have been revised slightly with minimal changes, however the changes provide more clarity. For the Enquiry, candidates are still required to write about a minimum of two artists/designers and a minimum of two pieces of work by each artist/designer.

### **Media and techniques — all levels**

Centres were allowing candidates to experiment with a wide variety of different materials 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 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 tended to be: still life, portrait, body adornment, fashion, architecture etc. Traditional media and digital photography were also 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 well-devised design briefs helped candidates engage thoroughly in the design process and personalisation of choice led to higher quality work. The A3 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.

### **Assessment judgements — all levels**

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\*'. 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 with regards to the national standards, what the requirements are and making assessment judgements.

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 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 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.

Most centres used individual record-of-work booklets/sheets for candidates with a simple checklist outlining each element of 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. Both of which were acceptable.

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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 to increase centres' confidence in making assessment decisions.

- ◆ Round 1 2017 ran for the full month of February 2017 (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 six at each level. Therefore, if centres were selected for 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.
- ◆ 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 six 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.
- ◆ If a centre is presenting at three levels and there are fewer than six 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 what candidates they put forward for verification.
- ◆ For round 1, units will be Design or Expressive but not split between levels, eg 6 × N3 Expressive, 6 × N4 Design and 6 × N5 Design.

- ◆ For verification to take place all candidates must have been assessed, passed or failed, for at least one assessment standard.
- ◆ All evidence can be interim or complete.
- ◆ Work does not need to be mounted but neatly laid out for verification and preferably labelled with what assessment standard it has been passed at.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ The verifier will look at the centres approach to assessment — students 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 the 31 July of each year.
- ◆ The verification process is fully supportive and centres found the process to be very helpful and beneficial.

### **Useful links**

[Understanding Standards link for internally assessed Art and Design unit exemplars](#) (click on: Art and Design Event Presentations)

[SQA Internal Verification Toolkit](#)

[Art and Design Updates](#)