



Qualification Verification Summary Report

NQ Verification 2018–19

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Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Computing Science
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2019

National Units verified:

H21X 73	National 3	Building Digital Solutions
H222 73	National 3	Information Solutions
H223 74	National 4	Software Design and Development
H226 74	National 4	Information Systems Design and Development
H227 74	National 4	Computing Science Assignment
H223 77	Advanced Higher	Software Design and Development
H226 77	Advanced Higher	Information Systems Design and Development

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Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

In Round 1 almost all centres used SQA unit assessment support packs using unit-by-unit approaches. One centre, delivering National 3 Information Solutions, adapted an assessment from SQA Unit Assessment Support Package 1 to provide its candidates with opportunities for personalisation and choice.

In Round 2 all centres used one of the SQA unit assessment support packs – Games Review, Language Tutors, Music Fans or Ticket Agency. In some cases it was apparent that centres had issued the tasks but not the pro forma that accompanies each task. Without this, key information was missing such as screenshot evidence of program code and evidence of database searches. Centres should ensure that they are using the most recent unit assessment support packs, and apply the thresholds required to achieve each unit. These can be found in the unit specification documents.

The prior verification service continues to be available free of charge and full details can be found on our [National Qualifications – prior verification page](#).

Assessment judgements

In Round 1, almost all centres judged the evidence according to the appropriate assessment standard at National 3 and National 4 level.

When using internal commentary as evidence of meeting National 4 Software Design and Development Outcome 1, it is important that candidates' comments accurately reflect the coding constructs and variable types, describing how they are being used, rather than simply indicating that they are being used.

It is not sufficient to simply name a security risk when undertaking National 4 Information Systems Design and Development Assessment Standard 2.3. Candidates must also describe the risk.

The majority of centres judged the evidence appropriately at AH level.

The standard accepted by some centres for Software Design and Development Assessment Standards 1.1 and 1.3 was much lower than required. A description of how a 2D array is structured should include the notion of coordinates/indices within the grid. A description of how recursion works should include the notion of a terminating/base case. The use of Scholar multiple choice questions is not appropriate when providing evidence of attainment of assessment standards.

In Round 2, it was noted that some candidates had included relevant information in their record of progress that was not taken into account when assessment judgements were made. When analysing candidate evidence for the N4 course assignment, a holistic approach should be adopted to ensure that all candidate evidence is taken into account. Candidates who have omitted a separate record of progress can still meet Assessment Standard 1.3 if the report elsewhere records evidence of ongoing testing and refinement when building the solution.

The evaluation report must include all three requirements — meeting solution, difficulties and improvements — for both the information system and the program.

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Section 3: General comments

The number of centres verified was significantly higher than in previous years. The majority of centres have adopted the good practice of annotating the candidate evidence to indicate where the assessment standard has been achieved. This was very helpful during the verification process. There is also increasing evidence of internal verification having taken place. Where there is a discrepancy between the assessor and internal verifier judgements, it would be useful to indicate which judgment call is carried forward.

Further guidance on internal verification can be found on our document [Internal verification: A guide for centres](#)

If a candidate does not meet the requirements of an assessment standard, then an assessor should return the work to the candidate and, without any further support, ask the candidate to add additional information to the answer they have provided. This does not count as a re-assessment.

There was evidence that centres are adopting this approach. Some candidates had appended additional information while others had offered further verbal explanation to the assessor. When oral evidence was used to add further detail to a candidate's responses, some centres had included a note of the discussion that took place. This good practice should be adopted to provide the crucial information on which to base the assessment judgements.

Centres should note that when re-assessment is necessary, a different assessment instrument should be used.