



NQ Verification 2016–17 Key Messages Round 1

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Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Drama
Verification event	Event
Date published:	March 2017

National Courses/Units verified:

H231 73	National 3	Drama Skills
H231 74	National 4	Drama Skills
H231 75	National 5	Drama Skills
H231 76	Higher	Drama Skills
H231 77	Advanced Higher	Drama Skills
H232 73	National 3	Drama: Production Skills
H232 74	National 4	Drama: Production Skills
H232 75	National 5	Drama: Production Skills
H232 76	Higher	Drama: Production Skills
H232 77	Advanced Higher	Drama: Production Skills

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Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Most centres continue to use assessment approaches from the SQA unit assessment support packs (UASPs) from SQA's secure website, or approaches derived from these.

For verification purposes, the UASP used should be clearly indicated on/with the submitted materials. For example, 'Unit assessment support package 1: unit-by-unit approach'. Some centres continue to indicate that the evidence submitted was 'centre-devised', when in fact only minor changes had been made in terms of stimuli presented to candidates. This would not be considered a significant change to the assessment task and centres should state which SQA UASP was used.

In this round of verification there was evidence of positive and creative approaches to assessment, offering appropriate structure and scaffolding to support candidates meeting the assessment standards. This demonstrated centres' ability to offer flexibility and choice within unit delivery.

For the Advanced Higher Drama Skills Unit there was evidence of good practice and creative approaches to assessment in supporting candidates' research skills.

There was evidence of some centres tending to over-assess and therefore generating a significant volume of evidence. We would encourage centres to identify opportunities for integrating assessment approaches which may help to streamline the process of gathering evidence for assessment standards.

Drama Skills units

For the National 4 to Higher Drama Skills units, outcome 1, assessment standard 1.1, there is a requirement for candidates to respond to a range of stimuli (National 5 and above must include text) before they select and develop ideas. Some centres are presenting imaginative and creative approaches to generating this evidence; centres are encouraged to select a range of appropriate and challenging stimuli, considering the level of the unit. Centres are reminded to include the stimuli presented to candidates with the evidence. This will allow verification to confirm that the responses/evidence generated directly relates to the stimulus selected.

For assessment standard 1.1, there were occasions where it is not possible to identify the candidates' individual responses. This information should be clearly identifiable.

Drama Skills units

For the National 4 and National 5 Drama Skills units, outcome 2, assessment standard 2.3, candidates are required to show exploration of form, structure, genre, or style and this should be a practical exploration. Some centres are generating the required evidence very clearly while others are only evidencing decisions candidates have made in relation to developing their drama, many of which are only discussing conventions. Those centres are advised to refer to Understanding Standards materials published on SQA's secure website for support in developing a more robust approach. This also applies to Higher Drama Skills assessment standard 1.2.

Drama Skills units

For the Higher Drama Skills Unit, outcome 2, assessment standard 2.3, centres are reminded that evaluating the rehearsal process is integral to meeting this assessment standard and therefore are encouraged to use assessment approaches to facilitate this. Rehearsal logs are a popular assessment tool but often are too generic and do not support candidates demonstrating the creative process. Providing candidates with specific sign-posting within these would elicit responses with more detail and depth, appropriate to the level. Some evidence submitted for verification did not support the candidates responding adequately in this aspect.

Assessment judgements

Verification requires the centre to make clear assessment judgements on the candidate evidence submitted. This will allow SQA to confirm that the centre is making consistent and reliable assessment judgements.

Verification has indicated that centres were, overall, making sound assessment judgements in line with national standards. The centres that submitted evidence with unreliable assessment judgements also often lacked clarity in their approach to gathering the required evidence.

Some centres continue to use the external course assessment criteria for performance to assess unit assessment standards. Centres are reminded that unit assessment in Drama should be judged holistically: identifying where a candidate has met the requirements of an assessment standard. Some centres are using approaches to assessment which assign a mark to responses; this is not appropriate for unit assessment.

Internal verification is being well managed by many centres and there is clear evidence of effective and consistent approaches to this.

Not all centres are aware of the requirement to submit an indication of the internal quality assurance procedures used by their centre/faculty/department. Centres should be aware of the following document — *Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres offering SQA Qualifications* (February 2011).

While the submission of a whole school or departmental/faculty verification policy is welcomed it is important to evidence how this is being applied to approaches to assessment and assessment judgements. Centres may wish to refer to the Internal Verification Toolkit at: www.sqa.org.uk/IVtoolkit.

For assessment standards where the use or application of skills is being judged, there should be a greater emphasis on the use of detailed observational/ assessor checklists to clarify the candidate's competency. If an assessor is using an observational commentary as a means of gathering assessment evidence, they are encouraged to use language which justifies this.

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Section 3: General comments

Candidates undertaking National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Drama are expected to demonstrate an understanding of subject-specific terminology commensurate with the level of the award. Centres are encouraged to refer to the Drama lexicons, available in the Drama course and unit support notes for National 5 and Higher. These contain an extensive, though by no means exclusive, list of relevant terms for National 5 and Higher Drama. This is particularly important in relation to the use of appropriate voice and movement vocabulary. Assessors are encouraged to embed drama vocabulary from one level to the next in their delivery of the units.

Centres are reminded to access the SQA Understanding Standards resources where there is a range of support materials demonstrating valid approaches to assessment and making assessment judgements.

In summary, centres are encouraged to:

- ◆ identify the instrument of assessment when completing the flyleaf for the candidates being sampled (eg UASP Drama Skills package 1: unit by unit approach; or Drama package 3: combined approach) — if a centre has devised their own assessment then this must be submitted
- ◆ directly label evidence with the assessment standard(s) it relates to
- ◆ consider the format of evidence. Although photographs can be submitted, candidates can often look considerably different in performance. Please ensure that all candidates are clearly identifiable
- ◆ refer to the judging evidence table when using an SQA unit assessment support pack — this contextualises the assessment task and gives advice on what a successful response would look like to meet the competency for each assessment standard
- ◆ ensure that they are using the most recent version of the unit assessment support packs

If a candidate requires re-assessment, assessors must make this clear on the evidence. The new candidate evidence must then be re-assessed and the judgement made clear. Judgements must be based on demonstrated attainment.