



NQ Verification 2016–17 Key Messages Round 1

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Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	ESOL
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	March 2017

National Courses/Units verified:

Unit code	level	Unit title
HA1R 72	National 2	ESOL: Preparation for Literacy
H998 72	National 2	ESOL for Everyday Life Reading and Writing
H24H 73	National 3	ESOL for Everyday Life
H24H 74	National 4	ESOL for Everyday Life
H24L 74	National 4	ESOL in Context
H24N 74	National 4	Added Value Unit — ESOL Assignment

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Examples of good practice in approaches to assessment

Overall, centres had submitted approaches to assessment making good use of the unit assessment support packs (UASPs).

The majority of assessors and internal verifiers had paid close attention to previous verification key messages reports for ESOL and practitioners had benefitted from support from nominees and from accessing assessment understanding standards materials available on the SQA Secure website.

Candidates undertaking the new Preparation for Literacy Unit at National 2 had been appropriately entered for this unit and as a result of clear oral instructions from the assessor to the candidates, demonstrated a good understanding of how to complete the assessment tasks.

Centre submissions for the National 4 Added Value Unit — ESOL Assignment continue to show that the CfE principles of personalisation and choice are being fully implemented as evidenced by a range of interesting presentations. In ESOL for Everyday Life and ESOL in Context units, for outcome 1, reading, and outcome 3, listening, there was evidence that assessors were clarifying candidates' responses by checking orally, which is good practice. Assessors should note this has been done on the assessment task or on the candidate assessment record or similar document.

Assessors continue to provide useful feedback to individual candidates on their assessments and record this briefly on assessment responses and/or candidate assessment records or similar documents.

Guidance for centres on approaches to assessment

The UASPs set out one possible assessment approach. These can also be adapted for your own context or used to help you develop your own assessments. Centres are encouraged to adapt the assessments and to use alternative approaches to facilitate personalisation and choice. Candidates can also produce evidence during learning and teaching, taking into account any assessment conditions.

For centre-produced assessments or adapted UASPs, which are significantly different, the free prior verification service can be used to ensure they are valid.

If centres use assessments that are not in the UASPs, a document should be produced to show how the assessment standards could be met, eg if using a National Assessment Bank (NAB) from the previous NQs. A similar document to a judging evidence table will support assessors to make reliable and consistent judgements.

National 4 Added Value Unit — ESOL Assignment

For assessment standard 1.2 presenting findings orally, in English, candidates should be encouraged to use visuals in presentations: this is supportive to the candidates, and of the audience's engagement with the presentation.

Candidates should be supported at all stages of the process and where necessary provided with guidance. The assignment requires that the research, presentation and question and answer session must all be on the same topic. Each stage can be checked to ensure that the candidate has selected sufficient relevant information on which to base their presentation and that the presentation is on the same topic, followed by appropriate questions and responses on the same topic.

Assessors are strongly advised to double check that the sources provided by the candidate are in English. Assessment standard 1.1, selecting relevant information from straightforward texts in English, requires that the sources are in English. If the sources are not in English, the candidate cannot meet 1.2.

Assessing speaking and listening

Candidates, who rely heavily on the task sheet during the assessment, pay less attention to what their partner is saying and this results in a more stilted and disconnected conversation. In preparation for assessment of outcome 4, speaking, candidates should have practice in forming spontaneous questions during learning and teaching so that they don't have to rely heavily on the task sheet and can have a more natural conversation.

When combining the assessment of outcome 3 listening and outcome 4 speaking, candidates should be fully aware of the need to meet assessment standard 3.2, identifying clearly expressed opinions. This is particularly important at National 3 where there is sometimes a tendency not to express opinions to which their partner can respond appropriately to show that they have identified the opinion. If a candidate doesn't show they have met 3.2 during the conversation, the assessor could check this by asking some questions after the conversation and either recording this or commenting in the candidate assessment record.

Assessment judgements

Examples of good practice in assessment judgements

Overall, assessment judgements were clearly based on the assessment standards and candidates had been appropriately identified as pass or fail against these.

For outcome 1, reading, and outcome 3, listening, some assessors had shown good professional judgement in accepting answers synonymous with those provided in the UASP judging evidence tables and provided useful notes on the candidate assessment record to explain how assessment judgements were reached.

For outcome 1, reading, and outcome 3, listening, assessors were clarifying candidates' responses by checking orally, which is good practice, but assessors should note this should be recorded on the assessment task or on the candidate assessment record or equivalent document.

Guidance for centres on assessment judgements

For outcome 1, reading, and outcome 3, listening, the questions and example responses in the judging evidence tables have been mapped against the assessment standards. In some cases to meet an assessment standard a question requires more than one response. Assessors should note that half marks cannot be awarded where a candidate gets only one part of a response. In a few cases the information in the judging evidence table had not been correctly applied in terms of all assessment standards being met. Careful reading of the judging evidence table is required to ensure that candidates not only achieve marks but also answer correctly questions which are required to meet the assessment standards.

For outcome 2, writing, assessors should clearly indicate on the candidate evidence whether it is a first draft, second draft or final version. It is good practice to assess each draft against the assessment standards but if a candidate has been judged to have passed on their first or second draft and there is no final version, this should be noted in the candidate assessment record.

Assessors are strongly advised to use professional judgement when assessing candidate evidence for the new National 2 Preparation for Literacy Unit.

It should be noted in National 2 Preparation for Literacy Unit that for assessment standard 3.2, forming upper and lower case letters, when a candidate demonstrates correct placement on the line in the assessment task, there is then no need to assess this again for 3.3, positioning letters above, on and below the line following conventions, in another assessment task. If a candidate has not formed some letters correctly or positioned them correctly, only the incorrect letters need to be re-assessed.

03 Section 3: General comments

External verification

If formative/draft assessments have been submitted as evidence it should be clear that the assessor has decided to use this evidence as the candidates have met the assessment standards and that the assessment has been done under assessment conditions.

If the centre is using an assessment which is not from a UASP, the reading text used for outcome 1, reading, and the audio file and/or the transcript of the text used for outcome 3, listening, should be submitted with the candidates' responses.

A few centres had submitted an unnecessary amount of documentation for external verification which showed some duplication of evidence. Where possible, centres should review the processes and paperwork to ensure that activities are being recorded in the most efficient and effective way without placing undue demand on assessors or internal verifiers to duplicate information.

Internal verification

Centres provided, in most cases, good evidence of internal verification.

As well as ensuring national standards are maintained, internal verification should ensure that assessors are fully supported through the process of internal assessment. Internal verifiers and assessors may find the suggested approach in the [SQA Internal Verification Toolkit](#) useful to ensure national standards are maintained, assessors are supported and paperwork is not excessive.

The ['ESOL Common questions' document](#) is also recommended.