



# NQ Verification 2017–18 Key Messages Round 1

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## Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	English and Communication
Verification event/visiting information:	Verification Event
Date published:	March 2018

### National Courses/Units verified:

National 3	Understanding Language, Producing Language, Literacy
National 4	Analysis and Evaluation, Creation and Production, Literacy
SCQF level 5	Analysis and Evaluation, Creation and Production, Literacy
Higher	Analysis and Evaluation, Creation and Production
Advanced Higher	Analysis and Evaluation of Literary Texts, Creation and Production

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## Section 2: Comments on assessment

### Assessment approaches

There was a range of assessment approaches taken from centre-devised and unit assessment support pack materials. The approaches taken displayed thoughtful and innovative approaches to assessment, particularly at Higher and Advanced Higher. At all levels, personalisation and choice was often embedded into the assessment approaches, which allowed candidates to engage with a range of writing contexts particularly. Assessments were also often clearly linked to external assessment to allow candidates to progress effectively through the course.

For Advanced Higher, centres were seen to encourage candidates to annotate texts (often ones used to demonstrate or develop skills of textual analysis) as part of the assessment approach to outcome 1 of Analysis and Evaluation of Literary Texts. This holistic approach to assessment resulted in a high level of engagement from the candidates, and offered a seamless way in which evidence could be gathered for the assessment of the candidates' understanding of main ideas, themes, and techniques. There was also a pleasing integration of the skills learned in outcome 1 being transferred into the development of Dissertation

planning in outcome 2 of Analysis and Evaluation of Literary Texts. This was seen through the annotation of the literary texts they were studying (either, as above, for Textual Analysis, or for Literary Study) along with annotations on their own Dissertation plans and sources used. This provided clear evidence of research outlines being improved and developed along with high levels of research and evaluation. Assessment approaches allowed candidates to build their independent learning and exposed candidates to a wide range of inspiring texts.

There were a small number of centres which were using older versions of unit assessment support packs and assessing candidates on assessment standards which are no longer required. Please see the [‘Understanding the Next Steps’ document](#) for further information. Centres are reminded that units and unit assessment support packs from National 3, National 4, SCQF level 5, and Higher have now been revised to reflect the changes in assessment standards.

In relation to the re-assessment of Reading, assessors should use their professional judgement to determine the most appropriate approach, which could include alternative/additional questions, oral questioning, or a new reading passage. After marking has taken place, it may be most appropriate to issue a new reading passage with questions of the same level of difficulty.

Overwhelmingly, centres were making judgements which were consistently accurate and in line with national standards.

A small number of centres were still taking a question-based approach to marking assessment standards. Centres are reminded of the holistic nature of assessment, and that candidates can achieve assessment standards throughout their response to the assessment.

In relation to Reading and Listening, some centres were assessing candidates on only one language feature for assessment standard 1.2 of Analysis and Evaluation at Higher, while others were assessing on the basis that candidates needed to achieve two different language features for all levels in assessment standard 1.2 of Analysis and Evaluation. Centres are reminded that candidates need to ‘identify at least two features of language’, which can be the **same** language feature for National 3, National 4, and SCQF level 5; however, two **different** language features are required at Higher level.

For the most part, in the assessment of Talking, centres provided detailed checklists with clear evidence of the Talking assessment standards being met. There were, however, still isolated incidents of centres providing checklists for Talking which were not detailed and therefore did not clearly demonstrate the basis for the assessment decisions. Centres are reminded that evidence required to demonstrate where assessment standards have been met for Talking must be either ‘a recording of a candidate’s response OR a detailed checklist of a candidate’s response OR detailed observation notes’.

## Section 3: General comments

Strong internal verification procedures were evident in all centres verified. There was evidence of cross-marking, effective recording of assessor and verifier decisions, and of highlighting where assessment standards had been met. There was often evidence of professional dialogue over assessment standards, which allowed for clear and supportive assessment judgements to be made.

There was a great deal of good practice in place in terms of texts chosen and in assessor comments, which provided very clear and helpful feedback for candidates.