



NQ Verification 2017–18

Key Messages Round 2

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Geography
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	May 2018

National Courses/Units verified:

Unit code	level	Unit title
H27K	National 4	Added Value Unit

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Good practice

The following good practice was found in relation to assessment approaches:

- ◆ Most centres used the unit assessment support package. A small number of centres adapted the unit assessment support package to relate specifically to the issue or topic being studied.
- ◆ All submissions included complete unit evidence.
- ◆ Candidates had been encouraged to produce evidence in a format that was suitable for them. This included posters, leaflets and, mainly, written reports.
- ◆ Success criteria have been written in child-friendly language.
- ◆ There was evidence of personalisation and choice in choosing topics in some centres.
- ◆ Some centres provided useful templates to help candidates structure their written responses.
- ◆ There was a mixture of fieldwork and library-based topics.

Areas of concern

There were no concerns about approaches to assessment and all centres were accepted.

Assessment judgements

Good practice

The following good practice was found in relation to assessment judgements:

- ◆ Most assessment judgements in the centres verified were in line with national standards.
- ◆ Many centres included detailed and helpful comments about their assessment judgements with good use of the Candidate Assessment Record.
- ◆ Many centres indicated on candidate scripts where assessment standards were overtaken — the use of 1.1, 1.2, etc, and the use of 'd' for description and 'e' for explanation.
- ◆ The use of ticks to indicate where assessment standards had been overtaken was helpful.
- ◆ Many centres included a summary grid to indicate which assessment standards had been overtaken by each candidate.
- ◆ Where centres had robust internal verification procedures, assessment judgements were more likely to be consistent and reliable.
- ◆ Verbal feedback/re-assessment annotated onto scripts by assessors was helpful.
- ◆ Concise and relevant submissions enabled candidates to meet assessment standards without having to produce a lengthy piece of work.
- ◆ There was a good understanding of assessment standards and little evidence of over-assessment.

Good practice in relation to each assessment standard included:

1.1 Choosing, with support, an appropriate geographical topic or issue for study

Candidates giving their added value submission a full title or aim, eg: 'Study of tourism in Loch Morlich and Aviemore area' and 'Why are population pyramids different between developed and developing countries'. Candidates who had a good choice of topic were able to undertake appropriate research and explain their findings. If topics were too narrow and/or limited, candidates struggled to give two descriptions and, particularly, two brief explanations for AS1.4.

1.2 Collecting relevant information from at least two sources

Candidates included a bibliography to indicate the sources of information. Candidates identified their sources in their introduction. Candidates incorporated source identification in the body of the text. Candidates listed fieldwork undertaken, stating how, where and when this was done. Teachers/lecturers confirmed in writing the sources used by candidates.

1.3 Organising and using the information collected to address the topic or issue

Candidates produced simple graphs from data collected, both first and second hand. Candidates produced tables to organise written sources of information, eg advantages/disadvantages; problems/solutions. Candidates annotated maps, graphs, photographs and diagrams to process information in a clear and concise manner.

1.4 Drawing on factual knowledge and understanding to describe and briefly explain some key features of the topic or issue

Candidates gave two brief descriptions and two brief explanations of their chosen topics, eg: 'The tree roots are exposed (d) because of the people walking on the soil (e)'. The birth rate is low (d) because women are educated and want a career (e).

1.5 Applying the skills of interpreting maps or fieldwork evidence or numerical/graphical information

Candidates gave clear statements about what their graph/map/diagram/table showed, eg: 'As you can see, private cars were the most popular mode of transport' and 'Women are not educated enough as the female literacy rate is at 69%'.

1.6 Presenting their findings about the geographical topic or issue

Candidates communicated their research findings effectively using geographical terminology appropriate to National 4. Many candidates used headings to give coherence to their presentation. All candidates used terminology appropriate to National 4, and demonstrated their understanding of the words they used, eg 'erosion, desire lines, environment and affordable housing' and 'contraception, sanitation, literacy and infant mortality'.

Areas for consideration

Centres are asked to consider the following:

- ◆ It is helpful for verification if ticks and 1.1, 1.2 etc are placed at the place on the candidate script where an assessment standard is overtaken.
- ◆ All centres should indicate on the Verification Sample Form whether candidates have passed or failed the unit. Candidates can only be recorded as passing the unit if all assessment standards are complete and overtaken.
- ◆ Candidates could make more use of some sources, especially photographs.
- ◆ Assessment standard 1.3 asks candidates to organise and use the information collected.

Section 3: General comments

- ◆ Many centres had clear internal verification procedures to show how quality assurance ensures that national standards have been applied.
- ◆ Quality assurance templates were devised by some centres to give a clear and staged protocol for quality assurance.
- ◆ Centres used cross-marking as part of their internal verification processes.
- ◆ The Verification Sample Form was completed appropriately by most centres.
- ◆ While a wide range of topics could be deemed appropriate for this unit, they must be investigated in a geographical way. Some candidates included material that was not geographical (eg the history of Everton FC) alongside appropriate information (eg a map showing the players' nationality in different years).
- ◆ The National 4 Added Value Unit Webinar is available on the SQA secure website. It would be helpful if this document could be shared during internal verification/quality assurance meetings.