

NQ Verification 2016–17

Key Messages Round 1

01

Section 1: Verification group information

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

National Courses/Units verified:

Unit code	level	Unit title
H7VJ	Advanced Higher	Geographical Skills
H7VK	Advanced Higher	Geographical Issues
H27G	Higher	Physical Environments
H27H	Higher	Human Environments
H27J	Higher	Global Issues
H27G	National 5	Physical Environments
H27H	National 4	Physical Environments
H27G	National 3	Physical Environments

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Good practice

The following examples of good practice in relation to assessment approaches were observed during round 1 of verification:

- ◆ Most centres used unit assessment support packs and current prior verified assessments.
- ◆ Submissions included unit approaches.
- ◆ Submissions included interim and complete unit evidence.
- ◆ Assessments included written test submissions.

Areas for consideration

Centres are advised to consider the following:

- ◆ From the start of session 2016–17 centres must assess candidates against the revised outcomes and assessment standards. This includes making sure that any prior verified assessments are still current and available on the SQA website.
- ◆ When adapting the wording of assessment standards to ‘candidate-friendly’ language, centres must ensure that the integrity of the assessment standard is maintained.
- ◆ When centres devise their own assessment tasks, they must include the ‘possible responses’ for verification.
- ◆ For the Advanced Higher Geographical Skills unit, choices of statistical techniques provided to candidates should be appropriate to their research question.
- ◆ When centres are devising their own assessments, tasks should not be overly complicated to make the process as simple as possible for candidates.

Assessment judgements

Good practice

The following examples of good practice in relation to assessment judgements were observed during round 1 of verification:

- ◆ Assessment judgements were in line with national standards.
- ◆ Many centres included detailed and helpful comments about assessment judgements.
- ◆ 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 provided clarity.
- ◆ Many centres included a summary grid to indicate which assessment standards had been overtaken by each candidate.
- ◆ It was helpful for verification when ticks were placed at the place on the candidate script where an assessment standard was overtaken.

Areas for consideration

Centres are advised to consider the following:

- ◆ Each assessment standard needs to be assessed once only.
- ◆ Candidates need to be re-assessed only for assessment standards they have not overtaken. There is no need to re-assess assessment standards which candidates have already achieved.
- ◆ Centres are only required to submit evidence for one unit at each level.
- ◆ Where cross-marking has taken place, assessors should agree the final decision for each candidate and include this decision in the evidence submitted for verification.

Section 3: General comments

Many centres had clear internal verification policies to show how quality assurance ensures national standards had been applied.

Quality assurance templates were devised by some centres to give a clear and staged protocol for quality assurance.

The verification sample form was completed appropriately by most centres.

The reasons for 'not accepted' outcomes were as follows:

- ◆ Use of an old prior verified assessment which did not meet all of the current assessment standards.
- ◆ Centre-devised assessment did not allow candidates to overtake all the assessment standards stated by the centre.
- ◆ At Higher, where an assessment standard requires two detailed responses, candidates gave one detailed response and a second weaker response which did not meet the minimum standard.
- ◆ At Higher, assessment standard 1.1 — interpreting complex geographical information from at least two sources one of which must be a map and the other source must relate to the area shown on the map — the task required features to be matched with grid references, which is not appropriate.
- ◆ At Advanced Higher, assessment standard 3.2 — analysing the results of the calculation to reach a valid conclusion — insufficient analysis was found in candidate responses.
- ◆ At Advanced Higher, assessment standard 4.2 — Analysing a map or map-based diagram — insufficient analysis was found in candidate responses.

The reason for 'verification cannot proceed' was:

- ◆ The centre did not provide a judging evidence table to complete a centre-devised assessment.