



Internal Assessment Report: Biology/Human Biology/Biotechnology

Sector Panel or SSC: Biology

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

National Units

Titles/levels of National Units verified

Access/Intermediate 1 Biology
Intermediate 2 Biotechnology
Higher Biology
Advanced Higher Biology

General comments

Most centres submitted evidence of a very high standard.

Outcomes 1 and 2 were assessed using SQA-published NAB tests at all centres verified.

Marking was accurate and consistent, with most of the centres using updated mark schemes.

There was a notable increase in the number of centres carrying out internal verification, which resulted in fewer centres having issues identified.

Where internal verification has produced a change to a candidate's mark, this should be clearly recorded and obvious.

The Performance Criteria for Outcome 3 of Intermediate 2 Biotechnology differ from those for Outcome 3 in Biology/Human Biology Units. Outcome 3 in Intermediate 2 Biotechnology is a problem-solving activity rather than an experimental activity.

As only one completed report is required for Outcome 3 it need not necessarily be linked to the Unit being verified, but must be submitted with other candidate evidence. It is a requirement at all levels that a candidate must pass Outcome 3 before a pass in the Course can be awarded.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development

The practice of internal verification should continue to be encouraged.

An increased percentage of centres showed internal verification. It would greatly assist the external verification process if the marker and/or the internal verifier indicated on candidate scripts where the individual Performance Criteria were being awarded, rather than on a separate (tick-box) mark sheet.

Unit assessment is **Pass** or **Fail** — many centres appear to award a variety of grades/percentages.

For Outcome 3:

- ◆ The degree of complexity should reflect the level of the award, in particular the practical work undertaken and the reporting of such work at AH.
- ◆ Extrapolation of graph work should not be awarded marks.
- ◆ Candidates should provide more specific evaluation relating to the experiment, rather than the generalised statements that regularly appear.
- ◆ In terms of staff development, the verifier's report should be made available to the appropriate members of staff. This is particularly important where the member of staff responsible for forwarding the verification report is a teacher of another science discipline.