



**National Qualifications 2015
Internal Assessment Report
Scottish Studies**

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

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified:

HY3P 43 Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 3)

HY3P 44 Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 4)

HY3P 45 Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 5)

HY3P 46 Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus (SCQF level 6)

General comments

Verifiers were pleased to confirm that the majority of centres had a clear understanding of the national standard. Two of those centres verified were accepted after review; these centres had access to advice from verifiers in terms of action required. Verification samples included candidate evidence from SCQF levels 3, 4, 5 and 6. Verifiers were also pleased to see a variety of activities including written reports, posters and electronic presentations. In most cases, candidates were presented at the correct level; on occasion, verifiers were able to suggest that candidates be re-assessed at the higher or lower level.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Centres used a range of appropriate assessment items to generate evidence to show that candidates had met the national standard. This demonstrated that, in most cases, centres were familiar with Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials.

Evidence Requirements

Evidence requirements were clearly understood by most centres. It is particularly important that centres note the need to provide evidence for the appropriate number of aims and sources used by candidates as well as the level of support required.

Administration of assessments

Most centres assessed candidates to the national standard and were, in the main, consistent in judgements across the verifications samples. There was evidence of internal verification in submissions from some centres. It is advised that this should be specific and match with the internal verification process of the centre.

Areas of good practice

Based on the evidence submitted to this year's central verification event, Verifiers are pleased to confirm that:

- ◆ verifiers were able to judge standards most effectively where centres used published, or amended, candidate and assessor checklists; comments on these checklists are not mandatory but proved particularly helpful to the verification process
- ◆ use of language from the Assessment Standards helps to judge exactly how candidates have met the relevant standard
- ◆ a logbook approach proved helpful in confirming assessment judgements; inclusion of a range of candidate evidence such as basic notes, comment on the experience in carrying out research etc is to be commended
- ◆ use of a candidate brief that structures what candidates are expected to do is to be commended, especially where this encourages choice of activity specific to the skills of the particular candidate
- ◆ where candidate activity was a class talk/presentation, inclusion of DVD evidence was helpful
- ◆ centres had provided photographic evidence where evidence was physically large or difficult to package; this encouraged creativity in terms of possible activities
- ◆ where internal verification procedures had been applied to candidate evidence, specific comments were particularly useful; this often gave verifiers a clear indication that cross-marking had been effectively used to judge candidate evidence
- ◆ for one centre, evidence of the internal verification process was conducted across a number of centres clearly showing a committed approach to sharing standards
- ◆ some centres had used an interview with candidates to assess whether standards had been met — particularly in terms of selection and analysis of gathered materials and how knowledge of Scotland had broadened; where commentary was provided by centres, this proved to be helpful to verifiers
- ◆ candidate reflection on the process involved in gathering/selecting information to broaden knowledge of the Scottish Focus is encouraged

Specific areas for improvement

The verification team highlighted the following points for consideration:

- ◆ centres are advised to use and submit candidate and assessor checklists; where these are adapted to meet particular needs care should be taken to ensure all aspects of the outcomes are covered
- ◆ indication of the level of support given to candidates should be clearly documented in the assessor checklist wherever possible
- ◆ candidate work should clearly highlight the chosen Scottish Focus and this should be apparent in the candidate evidence
- ◆ aim(s) should always be clearly stated — either in the finished product or on a candidate checklist; where candidate aims have changed during the initial stages of the project, it may be worth checking that the original aim has been amended to reflect the change

- ◆ use of a hypothesis should be considered; this may help candidates focus more clearly on their aims and analysis of their findings
- ◆ appropriate support could be offered to candidates at level 4 by requesting that they select aims from a list or by providing sample aims
- ◆ centres are advised to encourage candidates to tailor their choice of activity to their skills; film, drama production and artwork are acceptable mediums for candidates to demonstrate broadening their knowledge of Scotland
- ◆ candidates should ideally be given a choice of activity — even after a Unit of work done as a class — to allow them to benefit from their individual strengths
- ◆ centres should ensure that candidates are clear on the difference between sources and resources
- ◆ personal knowledge is not recognised as a source — this does not demonstrate broadening knowledge of the Scottish focus
- ◆ use of a variety of types of sources is preferred; candidates could be encouraged to use books, interviews, surveys, as well as internet sources
- ◆ candidates should be encouraged to ensure that specific sources and resources used are clearly identified either on the candidate checklist or in a detailed bibliography
- ◆ for level 6 it is important that candidates fulfil assessment standard 2.3; this must include reflection on the process and effectiveness of their chosen activity
- ◆ at level 6 it is important that candidates fully analyse material in order to meet Assessment Standards; it is recommended that detailed analysis/evaluation is included throughout their method of communication
- ◆ centres must clearly instruct candidates to express information in their own words and that material should not be lifted directly from source unless acknowledged; where there is doubt, centres are advised to use a simple online search to ensure that candidate work is original
- ◆ support provided by centres to candidates to move assessment to an upper level is to be encouraged through additional analysis, reflection or generation of further evidence on what has been learned about the Scottish Focus, but centres must check that all criteria of the higher level Unit has been covered; alternatively, to avoid a fail, it may be appropriate to award at the lower level
- ◆ evidence of the internal verification process should be clearly indicated to ensure that centres have a rigorous approach to the assessment process; it is advised that this needs to be more than a signature to show that the process has been undertaken