



Qualification Verification Summary Report

NQ Verification 2018–19

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Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Hospitality: Practical Cookery
Verification event/visiting information	Event and visiting
Date published:	June 2019

National Courses/Units verified:

H20H	National 3	Cookery Skills, Techniques and Processes
H20H	National 4	Cookery Skills, Techniques and Processes
H20L	National 3	Understanding and Using Ingredients
H20L	National 4	Understanding and Using Ingredients
H20M	National 3	Organisational Skills for Cooking
H20M	National 4	Organisational Skills for Cooking
H20P 74	National 4	Producing a Meal — added value unit
C839 75	National 5	Practical Activity — IACCA*

*Internally-assessed component of course assessment

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Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

National 3 and 4 — units

This year, all centres chose either the unit by unit or combined approach to assessment.

The majority of centres made good use of the unit assessment support pack materials. In a number of cases, centres were using their own recipes for assessment purposes. Unfortunately, most of these had not been verified, and the skills were not at the correct level for the candidates who were being presented. It is important to remember that centre-devised recipes should be submitted to SQA for prior verification if they are to be used for assessment purposes.

If centres wish to develop their own assessment recipes, guidance on how to do so is available on SQA's website under 'Developing Assessment Items'. All recipes submitted for verification should be based on the criteria within this document. Alternatively, there are a number of 'prior verified' recipes available on SQA's secure website for centres to use. Centres are also reminded that the most up to date materials, as published on the SQA secure website, must be used at all times.

For each unit, at each level, and for each level of the combined approach, the recording documentation for candidate evidence is very similar. On completion of the candidate assessment, it is good practice that the following documents are included, signed, and dated:

- ◆ a completed assessor checklist of candidate attainment
- ◆ a completed candidate worksheet/workbook (assessed)
- ◆ other relevant evidence, for example a centre-devised observational checklist/marking scheme that recognises the candidate's achievement of each assessment standard, in a practical activity

Candidate checklists are not required for verification purposes and should not be submitted as evidence.

Recording documents

Most centres now choose to record candidate performance on the assessor's checklist of candidate attainment. In most cases these were completed with good detail and were personalised to record the performance of each candidate.

Using this written evidence, assessors should be able to relate to how the candidate has met the assessment standard. This record may be in addition to comments on the candidate's worksheet or workbook. If photographic evidence is included in candidate evidence, then only brief comments are required on the checklist of candidate attainment. However, if no photographic evidence is available, then a more detailed assessor's checklist of candidate attainment must be provided, to give a clear idea of the assessor's observations, and professional judgement of how the candidate met the assessment standards.

Photographic evidence was good this year. However, centres are reminded that photographs should match the assessor's commentary of candidate attainment. Additionally, photographs should be of the candidate's work, not the candidates themselves.

Reference must be made as to whether a candidate has achieved an assessment standard or needs to be re-assessed.

National 4 — added value unit

Centres continue to choose from the set of given recipes to carry out this practical activity. Centres can submit their own recipe choices for prior verification if desired. Centres interpreted and used the current SQA recipes effectively, and

provided support to an appropriate level. Centre assessors confidently carried out the added value unit assessments. The standard of candidate skills observed at this level this year was excellent.

The added value unit is subject to visiting verification and it should be carried out at appropriate times to ensure that, if selected for verification, the first cohort is verified by the visiting verifier. Centres will be advised if they have been selected for verification by the end of January each year.

National 5 — course assessment

All centres used the recipes provided by SQA to carry out the practical activity.

Most centres are using the time prompts correctly as outlined in 'Practical Activity Instructions for Centres', however there are still a number of centres not using these guidelines. Assessors should ensure they are familiar with the assessment arrangements prior to the commencement of marking.

It is also important to be aware that candidates cannot use mobile phones as timers during the practical activity.

It is essential that candidates are given enough time prior to the commencement of the practical activity to ensure all ingredients are weighed and measured ready for the assessment to begin. Extra ingredients must also be available for candidates should they require them.

A number of centres used alternative ingredients for some candidates for a variety of reasons, which is acceptable, but it is essential that any changes to the recipes are authorised by SQA before the practical activity takes place.

Holistic marking instructions were also provided, and the majority of centres produced their own marking grids to implement these, or to record candidate performance throughout the task. It was found that centre staff are becoming much more confident in applying the holistic marking instructions effectively. However, there are still a few centres adopting a one-mark-by-one-mark approach with their grids. Centres are reminded that this style of marking is not deemed to be holistic, as it does not give a fair assessment of candidate performance. This approach is unacceptable and must not be used.

Due to the changes in the marking of the planning stage, which is now identified as the assignment and marked by SQA, once the candidate has completed their assignment under assessment conditions the originals must be copied and then submitted to SQA for marking. The copy should then be returned to candidates for amending if needed prior to the practical activity.

It is then the centre's responsibility to provide support and ensure a candidate's plan is workable, which includes correction of timings and service details as detailed in the recipes, therefore enabling candidates to undertake the practical element of the assessment logically.

Logical sequencing is a key factor in the workability of a time plan. Where possible, the candidate's own time plan should be amended to ensure it is workable. If at this stage the assessor feels a candidate's time plan is still unworkable, even after assessor input, it is only at this point that a candidate should be given a centre-devised time plan. Candidates should have their time plan visible throughout the practical activity. Under no circumstances should candidates be allowed to elect to use a centre time plan because they deem it to be better than their own.

Assessment judgements

National 3 and 4 — units

This year saw a number of centres failing to make any judgements regarding candidate performance. Centres are reminded that before they submit evidence for verification purposes, assessor judgements must be made and clearly identified.

Centres are also reminded that at National 3 and 4 levels, candidates should be given a centre-devised time plan where dovetailing is required. They should not be expected to devise their own plan.

National 4 — added value unit

Judgements were made using the 'making assessment judgements' guidance in the unit assessment support pack, and this was often enhanced by centre-devised marking grids to support a consistent approach. This was used by many centres that were selected for visiting verification and is good practice. Please note, the holistic approach must be used to evidence the candidate's success, and to ensure all assessment standards are achieved.

All centres visited this year provided candidates with a centre-devised time plan which enabled candidates to carry out the implementing stage (practical activity) at this level. Candidates should be given sufficient opportunity to become familiar with the contents of the centre-produced time plan prior to their assessment.

Planning stage — candidate's planning booklets

Marking of the planning booklets should be carried out in advance of the candidates performing the implementation stage, to ensure they have achieved the desired outcome. This should be accompanied by the assessor's comments to recognise this.

Equipment list

Candidates should list the minimum items of equipment that would allow both dishes to be produced, and requisition what they need accordingly, for example if they were making soup, they would require a saucepan.

Garnish and decoration should be appropriate to the level, with candidates showing individuality and not finishing their dishes in the same way.

National 4 candidates should not be expected to pipe cream, as piping is deemed to be a National 5 skill.

Implementing stage

This stage of the assessment should only be marked by subject specialists who have an understanding of SQA practical assessment requirements and are equipped to make professional judgements in this area.

Candidates should be given sufficient time to prepare all ingredients and equipment in advance of their start time. They should then carry out the plan within the given time. However, should a candidate over-run fractionally, professional judgement should be used to decide whether the dishes are ready to be served up very shortly after. Candidates should not be penalised at this level if it is obvious their dishes are almost ready to serve.

Re-assessment

Should a candidate require re-assessment in one or two assessment standards, then professional judgement is required. The candidate can be re-assessed with an appropriate activity at a given time, for example if a candidate has forgotten to garnish the finished dish, and has therefore not achieved assessment standard 1.4 of the added value unit, they would not be expected to be re-assessed on a whole new task. It would be deemed appropriate to re-assess this assessment standard during another practical activity. If, however, the candidate has burned the main course and it is not deemed to be edible, while also forgetting to decorate the dessert, a complete re-assessment would be required. Assessors would use their professional judgement as to when a complete re-assessment would be required.

National 5 — course assessment

Implementing stage

This stage must be marked by subject specialists, to ensure validity and reliability, and that professional judgements are adhered to. It is essential that the assessor is therefore familiar with the standards required for the various cookery processes and preparation techniques used within the assessment recipes.

The recipes this year were well received by both candidates and assessors, with the majority of candidates able to serve all three courses on time.

Recipes

Some candidates were spending too long on vegetable preparation, which resulted in valuable time lost elsewhere.

There was also an evident lack of precision in preparing the vegetables for the main course, for example many candidates sliced the peppers as opposed to cutting them into batons. Candidates were not clear either about the difference

between a dice and fine dice — resulting in many candidates chopping the onion for both dishes.

The timing, preparation and cooking order of ingredients varied from centre to centre, with the majority of candidates managing to cook and serve their dishes in the allocated time.

Assessors should only be assessing skills and techniques listed in the detailed marking instructions, they should not add additional skills or techniques to the assessment. Prior to the commencement of the practical activity the assessor should be very clear about what they are and are not assessing.

Candidates should also be reminded that tasting and seasoning is important to ensure flavour is adjusted appropriately. This was not always evident. However, centres must be aware that failure to taste and season does not mean that the candidate automatically receives zero marks for skills, as all other skills listed in this section are also taken into account when determining a holistic mark.

When awarding marks for garnishing and decoration of the finished dishes, centres are reminded that it is acceptable for candidates to garnish/decorate either the food or the plate, but to be deemed appropriate it must consist of a component (ingredient) and a preparation technique. It is not appropriate for candidates to use shop-bought decorations and achieve credit for a preparation technique. In this year's starter recipe candidates were required to garnish the soup with parsley croutons, which were also a component of the recipe. It was not necessary or appropriate to add any other garnish.

There was also some confusion around the assessment of simmering in the main course — some assessors took this to mean simmering of the tagliatelle when in fact it was referring to the simmering of the sauce. Some candidates and assessors were clearly unsure what was required when assessing weighing and measuring for 4 marks. This is the weighing and measuring of those ingredients listed as prepared weight in the ingredients list and this must be witnessed by the assessor during the practical activity to be awarded the 4 marks. Centres are reminded that if a component is missing at service, or any component is inedible, then the candidate must be awarded zero marks for service of that course/dish.

The completion of this practical activity requires a high standard of multitasking, and centres are reminded that candidates should have experience of this type of multitasking in advance of the course assessment. Centres are advised to ensure candidates have experienced the creation of three dishes (possibly through prelim activity or a similar opportunity) in advance of their course assessment, to ensure they are thoroughly prepared for the practical activity.

Section 3: General comments

National 3 and 4 — units

When submitting materials for verification, please ensure that an assessment judgement for either specific assessment standards or complete units has been made. If a candidate has achieved the unit, it is deemed 'complete,' not 'interim', on the flyleaf.

If a candidate does not achieve the minimum requirement within an assessment standard, they do not achieve that assessment standard. They can be re-assessed, and the same standard applies. Re-assessment guidance is clearly documented in unit assessment support packs.

There was an improvement in the number of centres carrying out internal verification, however, it was not always effective. Centres are reminded that internal verification is more than a signature on a page. It needs to be rigorous, reliable, and fair, so that any anomalies are highlighted. Some centres will need to review their internal verification procedures to ensure that they are effective. [SQA's Internal Verification Toolkit](#) offers a possible approach. A minimum of 25% of all materials should be internally verified, and it is good practice for a centre to submit a copy of their internal verification policy with candidate materials.

There was a greater percentage of centres submitting photographic evidence of candidates' finished results, which is good practice and can reduce the amount of written commentary required by assessors. It is, however, essential that the assessor's comments match the evidence in the photograph.

If a centre has not yet completed any of the unit assessments, then it is essential that they contact the National Qualifications Verification Team as soon as possible. They must not submit learning and teaching materials at this time.

Visiting verification

Centres should remember that, if selected for visiting verification, the session agreed with the visiting verifier should be the first one carried out in that centre. The purpose of this visit is to ensure that the centre is marking to the national standard. All other sessions should run thereafter, and where applicable, the assessor who was verified should share their experience to create a consistent and fair approach across their centre. The discussion between the assessor and visiting verifier proved to be the most valuable aspect of the verification activity and allowed for discussions to occur which ensured the national standard was being adhered to.

Good practice would be for centre staff not to assess their own candidates and, if possible, to make arrangements with colleagues to assess each other's candidates.

Centres are reminded that there should always be reserve candidates available during visiting verification, in case of absence on the day. Six candidates must be

observed during the practical activity, unless a centre does not have that number entered (however this would be known in advance of the visit).

In addition, there should be copies of the same six candidates' planning booklets available for the visiting verifier to check prior to the practical activity beginning.

This year saw an increase in the number of centres with an effective internal verification policy; however, there are still a number of centres working on the implementation of these policies.

National 4 — added value unit

The standard has been maintained on most visits, with support offered where necessary. Assessors and visiting verifiers have agreed that the format suits the candidates. Most centres have used internal verification effectively this year. Centres are however reminded it is recommended that 25% of candidates' work is cross-marked to ensure consistency of assessment judgements, but for this process it is not essential for this to be completed by a subject specialist.

National 5 — course assessment

Most candidates were suitably prepared for this level, which is a significant step up from National 4. All centres visited this year had developed a centre time plan for use in exceptional circumstances. Centres were also well prepared for candidates in the provision of sufficient ingredients and appropriate equipment; although saucepan lids did prove an issue in some centres. Centre staff must ensure time plans and service details (assignments), have been checked and amended to ensure workability prior to the commencement of the practical activity. Assessors are reminded that time prompts can be provided at regular intervals and 5 minutes before each service time.

It is not appropriate to provide any additional guidance to candidates with regard to hygiene and safety, or general support during the assessment, as in this situation the teacher's role is not as a class teacher but that of an assessor. Please note that background music is not permitted during the 2½ hour period of the practical assessment.

Finally, centres are reminded that visiting verification is in place to support centres in assessment of candidates, and to ensure national standards are understood by all who deliver the courses. If the verification decision is 'not accepted', the verifier will explain fully the reasons for this decision, and advise centre staff of steps which are required in future assessments, enabling subsequent sessions to take place.