



NQ Verification 2016–17 Key Messages Round 2

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Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Hospitality: Practical Cookery
Verification event/visiting information	Visiting
Date published:	June 2017

National Courses/Units verified:

H20P 74 National 4 Producing a Meal (Added Value Unit)

C739 75 National 5 Practical Activity (IACCA*)

*Internally-assessed component of course assessment

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Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

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 this year. Centre assessors confidently carried out added value unit assessments, however centres are reminded that the added value unit should only be carried out once all three units have been achieved by the candidate.

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.

National 5 — Course assessment

All centres used the recipes provided by SQA to carry out the practical activity, including guidance for planning and implementing. Holistic marking instructions were also provided and the majority of centres produced their own marking grids to implement this or to record candidate performance throughout the task.

Unfortunately, this year saw a number of the visited 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 must not be used.

This year did see all candidates complete the planning stage under assessment conditions, and have it marked after their first attempt. However, centres are reminded that support should be provided thereafter to candidates plans to ensure they work, therefore enabling them to undertake the practical element of the assessment without disadvantage.

Assessment judgements

National 4 — Added value unit

Judgements were made using the making assessment judgements and commentary on assessment judgements guidance, 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, centres should not be awarding individual marks then deciding on a pass mark, the holistic approach must be used to evidence the candidate's success and ensure all assessment standards are achieved.

Centres must provide a time plan for each candidate to enable them 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 — planning booklets

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

Internal verification of the planning booklets should also be carried out for at least 25% of the candidates prior to the implementing stage.

Centres are encouraged to create their own marking grid for the candidate planning booklet, to ensure consistency of marking — particularly for identification of minimum equipment required and the classification of ingredients. This would support decisions around the most appropriate category for specific items, eg tinned tomatoes may appear in two sections: if unopened — in dry ingredients; if opened — in fruit and vegetables.

Equipment list

Candidates should list the minimum items of equipment that would allow both dishes to be produced and requisition what they need accordingly, eg if they were making soup, they would require a saucepan. They are not required to list

every single piece of equipment to pass, as long as they have the minimum equipment needed to successfully create the recipes to be made.

Garnish and decoration should be appropriate to the level. This is left to professional judgement; however, all candidates should show individuality and not all be doing the same. National 4 candidates should not be expected to pipe cream as piping is deemed to be a National 5 skill.

Implementing stage

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

Re-assessment

Should a candidate require re-assessment in one or two assessment standards, then professional judgement is required and the candidate can be re-assessed with an appropriate activity at a given time, eg if a candidate has forgotten to garnish the finished dish and has not therefore 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 be required to use their professional judgement as to when a complete re-assessment would be required.

Candidates are not permitted to be re-assessed on part of an assessment standard, they must be re-assessed on the complete assessment standard, eg assessment standard 1.3 stipulates preparing the ingredients and controlling the cookery processes. If the candidate prepares all the ingredients correctly but fails to control the cookery processes, then the complete assessment standard must be re-assessed and the most appropriate way to do this would be to present the candidate with a whole new task of equal demand.

National 5 — Course assessment

Planning stage

Planning booklets should be used in their given format, with no additions or amendments made. Additional guidance should not be given to support the creation of the time plan — this should be done under assessment conditions. Candidates require the planning booklet, a set of the published recipes and pens/pencils to complete the planning stage. Different coloured pens/pencils allow the dishes to be colour-coded for ease of use by the candidate. This is good practice. Centres may have the benefit of IT to allow candidates to produce their time plans. Candidates may also require additional 'scrap' paper for rough

drafts/notes they create within the given time to support the final time plan being produced. They should not take previously prepared notes/supports into the assessment environment. The time allocation for this task is 1 hour 30 minutes. Most centres carried this out with an invigilator appointed to oversee the completion of the time plans under assessment conditions, which demonstrates good practice.

The candidate should receive the marks gained on their first attempt of the time plan under assessment conditions. Thereafter, the candidate can have support to make amendments to ensure they have a workable time plan.

Allocation of marks will vary from year to year. Centres should use the guidance for the holistic marking outlined in the accompanying judging evidence table which will assist with the marking approach.

Logical sequence is a key factor in the workability of a time plan and if an assessor feels a candidate time plan is not workable, the candidate should be given a centre-devised time plan. Where possible, a candidate's own time plan should be amended to ensure it is workable, but the original marks awarded after the first attempt still stand. If the candidate must be provided with a centre-devised time plan, the marks for their own time plan should reflect this. For example, a candidate should not be banded in the 5–8 marks section of the marking instructions and still receive a centre-devised time plan. It is only those candidates allocated 1 or 2 marks that should be in this situation. Centres should not be giving candidates a centre-devised time plan unless their own is deemed unworkable. Candidates should have their time plan visible throughout the implementing stage.

Service times must be clearly stated in the time plan, ideally within the body of the text to allow the candidates to observe and action at the appropriate stage. Recipes should be carried out in a logical sequence, which may see minor alterations to the sequence within the methods, which is acceptable. Professional judgement should be used in recognition of this. Candidates should not be penalised for taking the initiative and carrying the task out more efficiently.

Service details

Candidates' attention should be drawn to the information they are being asked for in the planning booklet. At National 5 level, any garnish/decoration identified should consist of a component part and preparation technique. At this level, all candidates should be using a preparation technique on their chosen garnish/decoration, eg not a sprig of parsley, possibly coriander (component), very finely chopped (technique) and strategically placed on the dish.

Marking of service details saw a great improvement from last year with most centres adopting a holistic approach to their marking in this area.

Implementing stage

The recipes this year were well received by the majority of candidates and centres and deemed to be at a good skills level for National 5. Most candidates were able to prepare, cook and serve the three dishes within the allocated time available.

Recipes

The definition of ‘chop and slice thinly’ seemed to vary from centre to centre for some vegetables, but this is an area where professional judgement should be enforced to ensure a consistency of standard across all candidates. Food waste was kept to a minimum, with excess waste only evident in the piping of the meringues, where some candidates did not use all of the meringue in the piping of the pavlovas. Some centres did not pipe the pavlovas according to the recipe and were reminded that it is essential for candidates to follow the instructions of the recipes as published on the secure site, as this is the national standard to which candidates are measured against.

Timing and cooking of the meringues and Mediterranean tart was a challenge for some candidates this year, but various approaches were adopted and deemed acceptable. In some centres, this included the use of a top oven and main oven, depending on the design of the cookers within the centre. Most centres however cooked the meringue first and then adjusted the temperature for the Mediterranean tart.

Candidates should also be reminded that tasting and seasoning is important to ensure flavour is adjusted appropriately. This was not always evident.

The completion of this course 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 prepared for the pressure of this eventuality.

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Section 3: General comments

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 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, in reaching agreement on the marks awarded.

Good practice would be for centre staff to not assess their own candidates and if possible put in place arrangements with colleagues to assess each other's candidates. Many of the centres visited took on board the suggestion that

candidates should not be assessed by their own class teacher. This ensured that candidates were marked on their performance on the day, as opposed to how they usually perform.

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).

Also, there should be 12 candidates' planning booklets (the six carrying out their practical activity and six others) available for verification purposes which have been marked and internally verified. It is recommended that 25% of candidates' work is cross-marked to ensure consistency of assessment judgements. Centres are reminded that it is not essential for this to be completed by a subject specialist.

National 4 — Added value unit

The standard has been maintained on most visits, with support offered where necessary. Assessors and visiting verifiers have agreed the format suits the candidates. Most centres have used internal verification effectively this year.

National 5 — Course assessment

Most candidates were suitably prepared for this level, which is a significant step up from National 4. Centres this year were also well prepared for candidates in the provision of sufficient ingredients and appropriate equipment. Time prompts were also well used to ensure candidates achieved the results they were deserving on the day of their course assessment.