



NQ Verification 2017–18

Key Messages Round 1

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Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	March 2018

National Courses/Units verified:

Unit code	Level	Unit title
H263 73	National 3	World Religion
H264 73	National 3	Morality and Belief
H265 73	National 3	Religious and Philosophical Questions
H263 74	National 4	World Religion
H265 74	National 4	Religious and Philosophical Questions
H264 74	National 4	Morality and Belief
H263 75	SCQF level 5	World Religion
H265 75	SCQF level 5	Religious and Philosophical Questions
H264 75	SCQF level 5	Morality and Belief
H263 76	Higher	World Religion
H264 76	Higher	Morality and Belief
H265 76	Higher	Religious and Philosophical Questions
H7XH 77	Advanced Higher	Philosophy of Religion

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Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

Most centres successfully used the SQA unit assessment support packages as the basis for their unit assessment approach.

A few centres produced assessments of their own; these were successful and the prompts used helped candidates understand what they had to do to achieve the assessment standards being assessed.

Almost all centres successfully based their assessment approaches on the unit-by-unit approach, and the vast majority of evidence submitted was based on written responses.

There was clear evidence that most centres were using SQA materials, specifically the judging evidence table (JET), in an effective manner.

Action points:

The following comments are intended as a guide to centres on future practice:

Some centres gave instructions to candidates that were a little confusing and did not fully support candidates' understanding with regards to the specific assessment standards, nor what they were required to produce to meet those standards.

A few centres had used assessment instruments that were based on out-of-date assessment standards to assess their candidates, which meant they were using incorrect assessment standards.

Some centres were using 'closed book' assessments as well as using these assessments as 'exam' practice. Centres are reminded that unit assessments are 'open book' and that using marks and time restraints for these assessments could disadvantage candidates.

Centres are reminded that they can use alternative methods of collecting evidence of meeting assessment standards; for example, naturally occurring evidence.

Assessment judgements

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

The vast majority of centres verified made assessment judgements in line with national standards.

The majority of centres had clearly shown on candidate evidence exactly where each assessment standard had been met and this greatly aided the verification process.

Many centres are submitting candidate assessment records, with extremely detailed justifications for judgements; this is a great help to the verification team and at the same time is very supportive for candidates.

Some centres gave full written records of any internal verification conversations that had taken place. This detailed evidence was a great support to the verifiers and is an example of good practice.

Action points:

The following comments are intended as a guide to centres on future practice:

A few of the centres selected seemed to be placing higher demand on candidates with regard to what they would accept as passing a particular assessment standard. These centres had overestimated the evidence required to meet the assessment standards and therefore candidates were potentially disadvantaged.

Centres should only send evidence at one level per candidate and should think carefully about how much evidence to send in to SQA for verification. Centres are reminded that they choose the unit that is to be verified and that they only need to send evidence from one unit, not every unit that candidates sit.

Some centres are still failing to show clearly on candidate materials where exactly assessment standards are being met, and this means that verifiers find it difficult to agree with centre judgements.

Some centres submitted information with regard to their internal verification process, but it was obvious from the materials submitted that parts of this process had not been carried out effectively.

Some centres did not always give candidates credit for meeting assessment standards, because they were met in a different section of the candidate evidence. Centres should also note that RMPS is included in Approach 3 for unit assessment approaches. Further information on this approach can be found at: http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/NQ_Next_Steps-Guide_to_what_this_means_for_teachers_and_lecturers.pdf

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Section 3: General comments

The majority of centres selected for verification were 'Accepted' or 'Accepted with Recommendations'. This continues to show that centres are using the feedback and support SQA provides in publication updates and key messages reports in a positive way, and this is to be commended.

Most centres had clear internal verification policies which demonstrated how consistently applied quality assurance ensured that national standards were applied.

Many centres submitted verification materials that were extremely well detailed and demonstrated good organisation, both in the assessment and preparation for the verification process.

The Verification Sample Form was completed appropriately by most centres.

Some centres submitted excessive paperwork in their submission. Centres are reminded that they only need to submit evidence for one unit for each group of candidates at a level.

Centres are reminded that they can submit both interim and complete evidence for candidates and that they should complete the Verification Sample Form clearly showing whether a candidate has passed or failed the units or assessment standards assessed.

Centres should ensure that they are using the latest version of the unit specification/unit assessment support pack materials as the basis for their assessment, as this will ensure that they are working with the correct assessment standards.

Centres should ensure that all staff are aware of the current assessment standards for each unit.

Centres are again reminded that if they are selected for verification they should ensure that they submit copies of the following information:

- ◆ the assessment task
- ◆ the JET adjusted to suit their own situation
- ◆ specific quality assurance processes for internal verification documentation
- ◆ candidates' evidence of meeting the assessment standards, including clearly marked assessor decisions
- ◆ evidence (and comments, where applicable) of the work done by the internal verifier

Centres seeking guidance on internal verification should refer to:
www.sqa.org.uk/IVtoolkit