

NQ Verification 2016–17

Key Messages Round 1

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies
Verification event/visiting information	Event & Visiting
Date published:	March 2017

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
H264 74	National 4	Morality and Belief
H264 75	National 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
H7XK 77	Advanced Higher	Medical Ethics

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

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

There was some evidence of using a variety of different approaches to evidence gathering and this helped support candidates in their learning.

Most centres had used the current unit assessment support pack materials in a positive way and this enabled their candidates to respond fully and achieve the relevant assessment standards.

Many centres had adjusted the judging evidence tables to include examples of their own specific responses that were appropriate to their chosen areas of study.

Most centres had used language in their assessment prompts that was suitable for the level being assessed and this served to support candidates with regard to completing the assessment successfully.

Action points

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

Some centres are still using assessment approaches that are placing demands on candidates that go beyond what the assessment standards require and this is disadvantaging some candidates.

A few centres failed to submit judging evidence tables/marketing schemes that were adapted to suit their own chosen topic and this hindered the verification process.

A few centres still failed to submit an instrument of assessment along with their candidate evidence — despite using the SQA checklist that is provided prior to submission of evidence.

Some assessment approaches were limited in their demands and this meant that some candidates were encouraged to give responses that were not actually meeting the assessment standards.

Some centres used out of date unit assessment support pack materials as the basis for their assessments.

Assessment judgements

During verification the following examples of good practice were observed:

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

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

Many centres gave a supportive commentary with regard to why assessment standards had been met and this documentation meant that the verifier had a clear picture of what the candidate had achieved.

Those centres that had submitted evidence of re-assessment by professional dialogue clearly demonstrated what their re-assessment arrangements had been and gave written records of any conversations. This detailed evidence was a great support to the verifiers.

The majority of centres submitted good evidence of internal verification policies which had been carefully applied. Some centres had used a verification certificate to demonstrate which staff had been involved in the internal verification process and when. It was also good to see that some centres had used verifiers from other centres to support their assessment and verification processes.

Action points

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

A few centres still failed to demonstrate on candidate scripts where assessment standards had been deemed to have been met by the centre.

Some centres 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 could have been disadvantaged.

A few centres submitted evidence that demonstrated a disagreement with regard to the assessor and the internal verifier — while this can happen, these centres should have shown the final decision more clearly. Confusion arose over which was the final decision and this made the verification process more difficult.

Centres should only send evidence at one level per candidate and should think carefully about how much evidence to send 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.

A few of the centres that had used professional dialogue with candidates as a means to gather evidence had not submitted any material that supported their decisions. A note or recording of statements made by the candidate would aid the verification process and ensure that decisions about assessment standards were accurate and verifiable.

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.

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Section 3: General comments

The vast majority of centres selected for verification were 'accepted' or 'accepted with recommendations'. This demonstrates that centres have followed guidelines and made use of the feedback and support provided by SQA in publication updates and in the key messages reports. This is to be commended.

Centres should ensure that they are using the latest version of the unit specification and 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 what the current assessment standards are for each unit.

Centres should note that RMPS is included in approach 3 for unit assessment approaches. Further information on this approach can be found in: [NQ Next Steps — Guide to what this means for teachers and lecturers.](#)

All centres should ensure that their paperwork is correctly completed — this is a necessary part of the internal verification process. Centres are also reminded that candidate evidence can be either interim or complete and should be marked accordingly.

Centres should remember that open-book assessment is perfectly acceptable for unit assessments — there is no requirement for ‘exam conditions’ for unit assessments. Centres that are assessing in this manner are disadvantaging their candidates unnecessarily.

Centres should also ensure that their internal verification processes actually do take place as stated in their documentation and are reviewed to ensure their effectiveness.

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

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

Centres and local authorities will find it very helpful to enlist the help of RMPS nominees in their area for support and guidance. Their expertise will be invaluable for centres seeking to develop their approaches to assessment and the reliability and consistency of assessment decisions.

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