



NQ Verification 2015–16

Key Messages Round 2

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Science
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2016

National Courses/Units verified:

H26A 74 National 4 Science Assignment (Added Value Unit)

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Most centres used the SQA Science Assignment (National 4) Added Value Unit assessment.

Most candidate evidence submitted for verification took the form of written reports. Some excellent candidate material consisted of both a log/day book and a presentation or report. Although not necessary, it was seen to be a good strategy for overtaking all of the Assessment Standards.

Posters seemed to be an effective means of engaging candidates, and good examples of posters produced by candidates were submitted for verification.

Centres who devise their own marking instructions based on the Judging Evidence Table in the Unit Assessment Support Pack should be wary of being over-prescriptive in their expectations.

Assessment judgements

Centres should ensure that candidate scripts are annotated by the assessor to show where a particular Assessment Standard has been achieved. Good practice would be for the internal verifier to also annotate scripts. This is helpful for candidates and for verifiers.

Centres should also record reasons for judgements in a clear manner for verification purposes.

Centres should use the published exemplars to help clarify their own knowledge of how to overtake an Assessment Standard. This can be incorporated into the Internal Verification approach.

The following specific points relate to individual Assessment Standards.

Assessment Standard 1.1 — Choosing, with justification, a relevant issue in science

This Assessment Standard was completed well. The relevance to the environment/society was largely well described. However, since there is also a requirement to explain the impact of the issue on the environment/society in Assessment Standard 1.4, it is critical for this to be considered carefully at the outset when candidates are selecting their topics for research.

Some centres submitted evidence for this Assessment Standard in the form of a candidate's log/daybook. Although this is not necessary, this was seen as good practice.

Assessment Standard 1.2 — Researching the issue

This Assessment Standard was completed well. As highlighted in previous reports, candidates must supply the full URL when referencing websites they have accessed. If one of the sources is an experiment/practical activity, the title and aim should be recorded.

Centres should ensure that the research is relevant and that information can be accessed easily by candidates.

Some centres submitted evidence for this Assessment Standard in the form of a candidate's log/daybook. Although this is not necessary, this was seen as good practice.

Assessment Standard 1.3 — Presenting appropriate information/data

This Assessment Standard was generally completed well. However, candidates must present some of their information/data in their own way. The correct use of title, plotting of graphs, labels and units (where appropriate) is essential; although candidates should not be penalised if there are only minor omissions/errors to the

presentation and there is sufficient detail to convey the information/data. The candidate must present their information/data by using at least **one** of the methods stated in the Unit Assessment Support Pack.

Assessment Standard 1.4 — Explaining the impact, in terms of the science involved

Candidates should relate back to the issue investigated and use relevant knowledge of science to explain at least one impact of the issue on the environment/society.

Assessment Standard 1.5 — Communicating the findings of the investigation

Candidates are not required to draw a conclusion or to summarise their findings. The evidence needs to be clear, concise, relevant and appropriately structured to meet this Assessment Standard.

03

Section 3: General comments

Centres are advised that it would be effective during their internal verification process to record decisions through discussion with statements on the candidate's work or on an attached pro-forma. Centres are also reminded that the use of Internal Verification Toolkit (www.sqa.org.uk/IVtoolkit) is seen as good practice.

Centres are advised that it would be appropriate during re-assessment to discuss with the candidates and record any verbal responses as evidence to overtake the Assessment Standards.

Centres are advised that all appropriate SQA documentation must be provided within the external verification pack. There are checklists provided to advise what this entails. It is especially important that the candidate evidence flyleaf is completed correctly and attached to the candidate evidence.