Qualification Verification Summary Report
NQ Verification 2018–19

Section 1: Verification group information

01

Verification group name:	Sociology
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2019

National Units verified:

H26J 75	SCQF level 5	Human Society
H26J 76	SCQF level 6	Human Society
H26L 75	SCQF level 5	Social Issues
H26L 76	SCQF level 6	Social Issues
H26K 75	SCQF level 5	Culture and Identity
H26K 76	SCQF level 6	Culture and Identity

02 ## Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The majority of centres used unit assessment support package (UASP) 1, although a few centres had implemented parts of UASP 2, the portfolio approach, to capture evidence for some of their candidates. Where centres had made amendments to the UASP these tended to be minimal.

There was evidence of good practice where assessors had noted the assessment standards throughout each candidate response. This resulted in evidence that was clear to follow for candidates, internal verifiers and external verifiers. However, from the sample of centres externally verified it was noticeable that this is still not standard practice nationally.

Good practice was evidenced where some centres had allowed candidates choice in the topics chosen for discussion in units H26L 75 and H26L 76: Social Issues. This personalisation and choice offered candidates the opportunity to explore themes/issues of interest and this was reflected in the high quality responses from these candidates.

Additional good practice was evidenced where centres had offered candidates diverse methods of producing their responses to assessment standards, such as recorded presentations, academic posters, and leaflets. However, centres using these diverse methods should ensure that candidate evidence captured fully demonstrates where an assessments standard has been achieved.

Centres submitted the internal verification procedures used by the department and there was clear evidence these procedures had been administered accordingly. It was also helpful when centres included information to make clear the context in which assessment judgements had been made. For example, some centres drew attention to that fact that they had students from very different courses in the sample. This was very useful in understanding the variety of responses.

Almost all centres provided clear annotated assessment judgements and internal verification initials to demonstrate their agreement, although where there was disagreement in decisions there was no evidence of professional dialogue over the decisions and actions taken. Assessors and internal verifiers should be aware of *Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres offering SQA Qualifications* (March 2019).

Actions:
♦ Centres should seek prior verification for any centre-devised assessments or UASPs that have been amended.
♦ Centres should take care not to alter the command words in assessment tasks.
♦ Assessors should continue to annotate where assessment standards have been achieved within the candidate scripts
♦ Internal verifiers should clearly annotate candidate evidence or the candidate assessment record to show their agreement or disagreement with assessment decisions.
♦ Centres might find it helpful to review UASP 2, (portfolio approach) and UASP 3 (combined approach) in order to explore the combined/portfolio approach as a means to reducing the overall assessment burden for candidates.
♦ Centres should consider the diverse range of methods available to candidates when producing evidence to meet assessment standards to allow candidates to develop a range of skills as they are assessed.

Assessment judgements

Overall the majority of centres were judging the evidence according to the appropriate assessment standard and were correctly entering candidates for the appropriate level. While many centres demonstrated a clear understanding of minimum competence in judging candidate responses, some centres would benefit from reviewing the SQA national standards required for SCQF level 5 and 6 as well as the example responses within the judging evidence tables of the UASPs.

There was good practice regarding the clarity of decision-making processes in terms of numerical annotation or ticks on scripts where assessment standards had been achieved. This was very helpful for verifiers in understanding the process that centres had carried out.

In a number of centres little evidence was present to indicate in candidate responses when remediation had taken place, perhaps because typed work already includes remediation in open-book conditions. Good practice was found where assessors have annotated their initials and date to show follow-up remediation work, or where candidates had titled responses as remediation. This enabled verifiers to follow the assessment process more clearly.

All centres provided a record of internal verification and there was also good practice within some centres which provided evidence of professional dialogue between assessor(s) and internal verifier(s). However, this was not evidenced across all centres.

Actions:

♦ It would be helpful if centres could include information about any remediation which has taken place, annotating where additional work has been carried out.

♦ Assessors and internal verifiers should review the national standards for SCQF levels 5 and 6 as well as the exemplification provided in the judging evidence tables for each unit, prior to reviewing candidate work to ensure they have a clear understanding of minimum competence for each assessment standard.

♦ Ensure that assessors and candidates are using the most up to date unit assessment support packs.

03 ▸ Section 3: General comments

Each centre selected for verification should submit evidence for a sample of 12 candidates, where possible. The centre should ensure the evidence submitted to SQA reflects the units requested for sampling. The centre can choose which unit (or units, in a combined approach) to select for each level. The sample submitted should comprise six candidates per level at the two different levels (SCQF level 5 and SCQF level 6). When completing the Verification Sample Form, it would be helpful if candidates were entered in this order. Ideally the sample should include a variety of candidate performances covering both pass and fail categories. Further information on generating the sample can be found on the National Qualifications external verification web page.

Centres should take care when transcribing details onto the Verification Sample Form that 'pass/fail' indications match, and that unit codes are entered correctly. On this form, 'interim evidence' relates only to where one outcome from a unit is submitted. If the unit has been completed but still requires remediation then this is a 'fail' at this time.