

# NQ Verification 2017–18 Key Messages Round 1

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## Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Sociology
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	February 2018

### National Courses/Units verified:

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

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## Section 2: Comments on assessment

### Assessment approaches

There was evidence that centres have now fully understood the notion of a minimum competence pass. Most centres used the Unit Assessment Support Package 1.

Evidence of good practice was found where assessors noted the assessment standard next to each question and encouraged their candidates to do the same in their answers. This made it easy for external verifiers to find evidence. Attaching the Candidate Assessment Record to the front of each candidate's assessment also made evidence clear for candidates, assessors and verifiers, but this is still not standard practice.

Centres were aware of the requirement to submit the internal verification procedures used by the department. 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. In most centres, however, it was often difficult to see where sampling of students' work had taken place. Very few

centres had internal verifier comments or initials on candidate evidence and record sheets to show their agreement or disagreement with assessor judgements. Those centres that did provide internal verifier annotations were very helpful. Assessors and internal verifiers should be aware of *Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres offering SQA Qualifications* (February 2011).

### **Action points**

- ◆ Continue to flag assessment standards in margins next to answers.
- ◆ Attach the Candidate Assessment Record to each candidate script, or a centre-devised alternative.
- ◆ Continue to send in evidence of internal verification and evidence of sampling of students' work. Internal verifiers should clearly annotate candidate evidence or the Candidate Assessment Record to show their agreement or disagreement with assessment decisions.
- ◆ The National 5 and Higher Sociology courses give rise to a variety of integrated delivery of units and integrated assessment approaches. Centres might find it helpful to review Unit Assessment Support Packages 2 and 3 in order to explore the combined/portfolio approach as a means to reducing the overall assessment burden for candidates.
- ◆ Assessors have a responsibility to keep up with published changes and should refer to the SQA subject pages regularly. Advice in relation to re-assessment of assessment standards can be found in [Sociology: arrangements for unit assessment for 2016–17 onwards](#).

### **Assessment judgements**

Centres were judging the evidence according to the appropriate assessment standard and were correctly entering candidates for the appropriate level. An assessment standard which was assessed leniently by a number of centres, however, was Human Society 1.1, where candidates often fail to give an example of both the common sense and sociological approach.

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.

There was little evidence to indicate any remediation which had taken place, perhaps because typed work already includes remediation in open-book conditions. Good practice was found where assessors had marked remediation as 'clarified through learner conversation' as this enabled external verifiers to understand the assessment process more clearly.

All centres provided a record of internal verification, but there was less evidence of good practice in checking assessment judgements, for example, blind-marking and cross-marking and sampling of scripts.

### Action points

- ◆ Record remediation. It would be helpful if centres could include information about any remediation which has taken place.
- ◆ Allow personalisation and choice. Very few centres allow candidates to choose their method of assessment. Centres should review their assessment tasks to ensure that candidates are being offered personalisation and choice in how they provide evidence to meet the assessment standards.
- ◆ Ensure that assessors and candidates are using the most up to date unit assessment support packs and are familiar with the current advice in relation to re-assessment of assessment standards. This can be found on the [Sociology web pages](#).

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## Section 3: General comments

Each centre selected for verification should submit evidence for a sample of 12 candidates. 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 Higher). 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.

### Action point

All centre assessors are reminded that assessments must be checked to ensure their validity before they are taken by candidates. Internal quality assurance procedures must ensure that all assessors have a common understanding of the standards required in the judging evidence table of the unit assessment support pack. Meetings between assessors and the internal verifier to discuss the planned assessment and the judging evidence table of the unit assessment support pack will help to standardise interpretation of assessment standards. While this might take some time, it is likely to save more time later in the assessment process.