



NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Message Reports

Verification group name:	Drama
Levels	N3 – Advanced Higher
Date published:	October 2016

This Report combines all Verification Key Messages for the academic session 2015-2016.



NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Messages Round 1

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Drama
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	March 2016

National Courses/Units verified:

H231 73	National 3	Drama Skills
H231 74	National 4	Drama Skills
H231 75	National 5	Drama Skills
H231 76	Higher	Drama Skills
H231 77	Advanced Higher	Drama Skills

H232 73	National 3	Drama: Production Skills
H232 74	National 4	Drama: Production Skills
H232 75	National 5	Drama: Production Skills
H232 76	Higher	Drama: Production Skills
H232 77	Advanced Higher	Drama: Production Skills

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The majority of centres continue to present assessment approaches from the Unit assessment support packs (UASPs) from SQA's secure website, or approaches derived from these.

For verification purposes, the UASP used should be clearly indicated on/with the submitted materials. Where centre-devised assessments had been developed, some of these had been internally verified by the centre or had been effectively modelled on SQA materials and did not require prior verification. Some centres continue to indicate that the evidence submitted was 'centre-devised', when in

fact only minor changes had been made in terms of stimuli presented to candidates. This would not be considered a significant change to the assessment task and centres should state which SQA UASP was used.

Centres should make use of SQA's prior verification service where significant changes are made to the Unit assessment support packs, or for new assessments. Centres are reminded to submit their prior verification certificate with materials if prior verification has taken place. There were a number of approaches to assessment which did not enable candidates to demonstrate the required skill set for some Assessment Standards — these were 'Not Accepted' at verification. However, this number is decreasing as centre staff engage with SQA published support materials and specifically design their approaches to assessment to support candidates in demonstrating the required skills.

Where the same assessment approach has been used for the same Unit across two or more levels, centres should ensure that the approach and related tasks take into consideration the necessary differentiation to enable all candidates to generate the required evidence at each level. Some centres had submitted a generic approach which did not support all candidates sufficiently. This is particularly evident at National 4 and National 5.

Some centres continue to use assessment approaches from previous National Courses. Although the national standard for each level has not changed, the assessment approaches must generate specific evidence to meet each Assessment Standard. Centres must adapt previously used materials to meet these Assessment Standards. The Unit assessment support packs which have been specifically devised for the new National Qualifications are the most effective method for generating the required candidate evidence.

For verification purposes, centres are reminded to only submit evidence that directly relates to the Assessment Standard(s) being verified. If evidence relating to specific Assessment Standards has been generated as part of a workbook/folio then this evidence must be clearly labelled with the Assessment Standard(s) to which it relates. It is not necessary to submit candidate materials that are generated as part of ongoing teaching and learning. Where a centre has not clearly identified to which Assessment Standard(s) particular evidence relates, this may mean that verification cannot proceed.

Drama Skills Unit

For the National 4 to Higher Drama Skills Unit, Outcome 1, Assessment Standard 1.1, there is a requirement for candidates to respond to a range of stimuli before they select and develop ideas. Some centres are presenting imaginative and creative approaches to generating this evidence. The range of approaches includes written, photographic, filmed and mood board evidence. Centres are reminded to include the stimuli presented to candidates with this evidence. This will allow verifiers to confirm that the responses/evidence generated directly relates to the stimulus selected.

Drama Skills Unit

Centres are also reminded that Higher Drama Skills, Outcome 1, Assessment Standard 1.1 requires the development of ideas for design to be generated.

Drama Skills Unit

For Advanced Higher Drama Skills, Outcome 1, Assessment Standard 1.1, candidate evidence provided by centres has repeatedly shown good practice in the use of presentations to allow candidates to present their research on their chosen practitioner to their peers. Centres are reminded that candidates should be researching form, genre, structure and style and how their selected practitioners used or experimented with these. Workshops, led by candidates, have also been used effectively to communicate research on findings and an opportunity for practical exploration of practitioners studied.

Drama Skills Unit

For the National 4 and National 5 Drama Skills Unit, Outcome 2, Assessment Standard 2.3, candidates are required to show exploration of form, structure, genre and style and this should be a practical exploration. Some centres are generating the required evidence very clearly while others are only evidencing decisions candidates have made in relation to developing their drama, many of which are only discussing conventions. Those centres are advised to refer to Understanding Standards materials published on SQA's secure website for support in developing a more robust approach. This also applies to Higher Drama Skills Assessment Standard 1.2.

Drama Skills Unit

For the Higher Drama Skills Unit, Outcome 2, Assessment Standard 2.3, centres are reminded that evaluating the rehearsal process is integral to meeting this Assessment Standard and therefore are encouraged to use assessment approaches to facilitate this. Some evidence submitted for verification did not support the candidates in responding in this aspect.

Drama: Production Skills Unit

For the National 4 to Higher Drama: Production Skills Unit, there is a requirement for candidates to explore and generate evidence relating to stimuli for two production skills for each Assessment Standard. Approaches to generating this evidence must allow candidates to explore practically both of their chosen production skills in relation to the selected stimuli. Some centres are not approaching and judging both production skills consistently.

Assessment judgements

Verification requires the centre to make clear assessment judgements on the candidate evidence submitted. This will allow SQA to confirm that the centre is making consistent and reliable assessment judgements.

Verification has indicated that centres were, on the whole, making sound assessment judgements in line with national standards. The centres that submitted evidence with unreliable assessment judgements also often lacked

clarity in their approach to gathering the required evidence. Some centres have been applying their assessment judgements leniently for a range of levels.

All candidate evidence must be attributed to individual candidates and judged accordingly. Assessment judgements should not be made on group responses alone. Judgements must be applied to individual candidate evidence.

Internal quality assurance is being well managed by many centres and there is clear evidence of effective and consistent approaches to this.

Not all centres are aware of the requirement to submit an indication of the internal quality assurance procedures used by their centre/faculty/department.

Centres should be aware of [Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres offering SQA Qualifications](#) (February 2011).

While the submission of a whole school or departmental/faculty verification policy is welcomed it is important to evidence how this is being applied to approaches to assessment and assessment judgements. Centres may wish to refer to the Internal Verification Toolkit at: www.sqa.org.uk/IVtoolkit.

For Assessment Standards where the use or application of skills is being judged, there should be a greater emphasis on the use of detailed observational/assessor checklists to clarify the candidate's competency.

Centres are reminded that Unit assessment in Drama should be judged holistically: identifying where a candidate has reached the requirements of an Assessment Standard. Some centres are using approaches to assessment which assign a mark to responses.

03

Section 3: General comments

Candidates undertaking National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Drama are expected to demonstrate an understanding of subject-specific terminology commensurate with the level of the award. Centres are encouraged to refer to the Drama lexicons, available in the Drama Course and Unit Support Notes at National 5 and Higher. These contain an extensive, though by no means exclusive, list of relevant terms for National 5 and Higher Drama. This is particularly important in relation to the use of appropriate voice and movement vocabulary.

Digital/filmed evidence of the practical application of skills is not mandatory. Where it is not available, an assessor commentary is acceptable. Centres are reminded that where digital evidence is submitted, candidates must be clearly identified. Alternatively, where an assessor commentary is submitted, this must be detailed enough to clearly describe the competency of practical skills to which it relates.

Centres are encouraged to:

- ◆ identify the instrument of assessment when completing the flyleaf for the candidates being sampled (eg UASP Drama Skills Package 1 Unit by Unit approach/Drama: Package 3 Combined approach) — if a centre has devised their own assessment then this must be submitted along with the evidence for each level
- ◆ directly label evidence with the Assessment Standard(s) it relates to
- ◆ consider the format of evidence. Although photographs can be submitted, candidates can often look considerably different in performance. Please submit evidence in a format that can be accessed
- ◆ refer to the judging evidence table when using an SQA Unit assessment support pack — this contextualises the assessment task and gives advice on what a successful response would look like to meet the competency for each Assessment Standard
- ◆ ensure that they are making use of the most recent version of the Unit assessment support packs
- ◆ only submit evidence for a candidate for the level that they have indicated on the Verification Sample Form. For example, if a candidate is part of the National 4 sample then the centre should not submit either National 3 or National 5 evidence for that candidate

Drama lexicons are available in the Drama Course and Unit Support Notes at National 5 and Higher. These contain an extensive, though by no means exclusive, list of relevant terms for National 5 and Higher Drama. This is particularly important in relation to the use of appropriate voice and movement vocabulary.

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If a candidate requires re-assessment, assessors must make this clear on the evidence. The new candidate evidence must then be re-assessed and the judgement made clear. Judgements must be based on demonstrated attainment.



NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Messages Round 2

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Drama
Verification event/visiting information	Visiting
Date published:	June 2016

National Courses/Units verified:

H233 74 National 4 Added value unit

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Most centres continue to be fully prepared for the verification visit, with candidate evidence available and well organised. There is generally a clear understanding of the application of national standards and candidates are given a range of opportunities to perform well. Visiting verification continues to be a very positive experience and suggests that centres are approaching assessment with greater confidence.

Some centres continue to have both National 4 and National 5 candidates working alongside each other, and in some cases this seems to have a positive impact on the quality of National 4 responses. However, where centres have presented National 4 candidates with an individual textual extract from which to develop their performance, this can often result in candidates not meeting the requirements for some assessment standards within the *Drama: Performance (National 4) Added Value Unit*. For example, this can result in candidates responding to a limited range of stimuli for assessment standard 1.1. In addition, candidate performances are not sustained for the required 10 minute duration.

Centres continue to find creative ways of generating evidence through practical exploration in assessment standard 1.1: 'Selecting ideas, showing an understanding of social and cultural influences on drama'. Assessors are offering candidates a variety of innovative and challenging stimuli, reflecting good practice in relation to this assessment standard. Centres are enabling candidates to meet this assessment standard by offering stimuli that gives personalisation and choice. Some centres are also aware of the need to adapt the approach to assessment where candidates choose to devise their drama from a stimulus rather than develop script extracts from a text.

However, there is a need for centres to support candidates further in generating evidence of their awareness of form and structure.

Centres are presenting candidates with a range of creative approaches to assessment to meet assessment standard 1.2. The approaches that have been specifically developed to support candidates in their responses to their chosen performance role continue to be most successful in generating the necessary evidence to meet the assessment standard. There was clear evidence of candidates producing creative ideas while preparing for their performance in both acting and production team roles.

Assessment standard 1.3: evidence was generated predominantly by recorded material. Most centres submitting digital evidence for this assessment standard had gathered good quality, clearly identifiable candidate evidence. Centres are reminded that any audio-visual recordings of performances of candidate work should be able to be readily accessed for verification purposes and good quality filming informs the verification process.

For assessment standard 1.4: 'Reflecting on their work and that of others', centres should ensure that the requirements of this assessment standard are fully met. Candidates should be supported in their responses while reflecting on their strengths and areas for improvement. In addition they should be given the opportunity to reflect on the contribution of two others within the production team.

The approach to assessment using annotated scenarios/scripts should be appropriate for all candidates and support all performance roles for it to be valid. In addition, all evidence submitted should be attributable to the assessment standard to which it relates; centres are reminded to label candidate evidence appropriately by indicating the related assessment standard on it.

There have been instances where centres have over-documented written evidence requirements for this unit and this may have impacted on the time available to allocate to practical work.

Assessment judgements

Visiting verification requires the centre to make clear assessment judgements to accompany candidates' evidence, allowing the verifier to reach an informed decision that the centre is making reliable, consistent and valid assessment judgements which are in line with national standards.

For most centres, there was evidence of reliable, consistent and valid judgements being applied to candidate evidence. In cases where the approach to assessment was specifically designed to meet the requirements of an assessment standard, the centre assessor was able to confidently and correctly judge the candidate evidence by referring to the SQA unit assessment support pack.

03

Section 3: General comments

In general, centre staff had a clear understanding of the standards for the *Drama: Performance (National 4) Added Value Unit*.

Overall, centres were well prepared for the visit and keen to ensure they had sufficient evidence for all assessment standards being verified. Where candidates were available for a live performance, they were engaged and often performing to very high standards for this level.

Positive feedback was received about this model of visiting verification, allowing one-to-one dialogue between visiting verifier and internal assessors. Centre staff showed a keenness to engage in professional dialogue and took the opportunity to have their questions or concerns discussed.

There was clear evidence of centres engaging with and applying effective internal quality assurance processes. Some centres are using local authority level documentation, filtering this for use within their own centre and further applying this within their subject-specific faculty or department.

Where centres had a rigorous system in place, this impacted positively on both development of approaches to assessment and the consistency of assessment judgements.

There was evidence of some centres using the recently published SQA Internal Verification Toolkit to support their internal quality assurance processes. This can be found at www.sqa.org.uk/IVToolkit.