NQ Verification 2015–16
Key Message Reports

Verification group name:	Italian
Levels	N3 – N5
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:	**Modern Languages — Italian**
Verification event/visiting information	**Event**
Date published:	**March 2016**

National Courses/Units verified:

H 219 73　National 3　Italian: Understanding Language

H219 74　　National 4　Italian: Understanding Language

H219 75　　National 5　Italian: Understanding Language

02 ▶ Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The number of centres selected for verification in Italian was relatively small.

The majority of approaches to assessment used by centres that were selected for verification were 'Accepted'. This demonstrates that these centres have followed guidelines and made use of the feedback and support provided by the Scottish Qualifications Authority in publication updates, the Key Messages reports and at events (for nominees and practitioners) in 2014 and in 2015. This should be reassuring for practitioners and is to be commended. Centres are reminded that centre-devised assessments should follow the SQA guidelines and advice in approaches to assessment.

The majority of centres sampled used the Unit assessment support packs (available on the SQA secure site) to assess their candidates. In most cases these assessments were not amended and were used successfully by the centres verified.

It is important to note that where amendments were made to the judging evidence table, this was done without altering the mandatory Assessments Standards and amendments were only reflected in the exemplification column (fourth column) of the table, where necessary. This is to be commended.

It was pleasing to note that the majority of centres ensured that they clearly indicated which Unit assessment support pack assessment they had used, eg Package 1, N5, Reading. It is recommended that one copy of the judging evidence table, the task, the texts and transcripts — for listening tasks — are also included for the whole sample. There is, however, no need to include one copy inside each candidate's clear envelope.

Centres should feel free to reformat the assessments provided in the Unit assessment support packs by slightly amending the questions, the texts or the layout to suit their candidates' needs while maintaining the standards. Should the amendments to the texts or questions be minor, these would not require to be prior verified.

Assessment judgements

It is reassuring to report that the assessment judgements made by assessors in the majority of centres sampled were 'Accepted' as they were overall in line with national standards. Overall, staff have made best use of the expertise already in place in centres or in clusters of centres. This should be reassuring for practitioners and is to be commended.

Centres should be reminded that, for verification purposes, and where possible, they should submit a range of evidence, ie some passes and some fails, including judgements for borderline evidence. This should ensure more effective and relevant feedback.

Detailed commentaries about each candidate's performance are very useful for internal and external verification purposes. However, it is acknowledged that this approach can be time-consuming. Therefore, a detailed checklist for each candidate's performance can be just as useful for the verifier, and more practical for the centre. This could also be used as effective feedback to candidates.

Centres should amend judging evidence tables in the Unit assessment support packs with a range of possible answers as produced by their own candidates to demonstrate how assessment judgements are made for each Assessment Standard (column 4).

Centre-devised information on judging evidence must be clearly referenced against each Assessment Standard. The award of marks is not a feature of Unit assessments. The inclusion of 'marks out of' will be disregarded for verification purposes.

Some centres noted each Assessment Standard next to each of the candidates' responses or on their written scripts as 1.2 / 2.3 etc… to evidence where the candidates had addressed these Assessment Standards. This is good practice as it is very useful and appropriate for internal and external verification purposes. A couple of centres used a colour-coded approach, highlighting each response addressing an Assessment Standard in a different colour in the judging evidence table and then highlighting the candidates' scripts using this system. It was very clear where each Assessment Standard had been met.

Centres should take a holistic and positive approach to marking candidate work. A candidate should be given credit for answers as long as the candidate meets each Assessment Standard overall, regardless of whether they are necessarily in the correct place. For instance, if a candidate does not have the correct information in one question, but has it in another, they may still be able to demonstrate evidence of addressing an Assessment Standard by demonstrating understanding of main details, etc. Equally, one answer from a candidate might address more than one Assessment Standard. This depends on the difficulty of the text the response relates to: is this section of the text simple, straightforward, detailed, detailed and complex, complex and sophisticated? There was evidence of this in several centres.

Centres are reminded that assessors should ignore extraneous material that does not contradict the response.

Centres are reminded that if a candidate does not respond correctly to the overall purpose question (Assessment Standard 1.1/2.1), the assessor can ask the candidate to explain their response orally. This could allow the candidate to justify or change their choice with justification, and therefore possibly address this Assessment Standard. This conversation should be briefly summed up on the candidate's script or individual record form. Following judgement of a script by the assessor, a change of choice in the multiple-choice box without justification would not demonstrate that the candidate has understood the overall purpose of the text.

03 Section 3: General comments

What evidence should a centre send in for a verification round?

Most centres submitted very clear and well-organised packages for verification, which is to be commended. This has facilitated the verification process and assisted in providing useful feedback to centres.

Centres should refer to SQA guidance on how much evidence to submit for each candidate via their SQA co-ordinator. Centres should only send evidence at one level per candidate for verification. For instance, if a candidate has completed a reading assessment and failed it, been re-assessed and passed the re-assessment, it is only necessary to send in the re-assessment.

Centres should only send one piece of evidence per candidate per Outcome for one Unit (ie no more than two pieces of evidence in total).

Centres should not include evidence for candidates at two levels, eg both National 4 and National 5 levels where there might be uncertainty at which level a candidate should be presented. **It is the responsibility of the presenting centre to make the final judgement on the level of presentation of individual candidates**.

How to complete the SQA Verification Sample Form

It is important that the SQA Verification Sample Form is completed correctly and matches the information on pupil scripts and the Candidate Evidence Flyleaf. This is very important, as the judgement (pass/fail; complete/interim/mixed) entered on the Verification Sample Form is what the verification exercise is based on, regardless of what is entered on the candidates' scripts or individual record forms.

Centres should arrange candidates in alphabetical order for each level and/or Unit on the Verification Sample Form: eg A–Z at National 3 reading, then A–Z at National 4 listening, then A–Z at National 5 writing. The order of the candidates' evidence must match the order on the Verification Sample Form.

The Unit code (eg H219) and level code (eg 75) need to be clearly and correctly entered. You will find the list of Unit/level codes on page 1 of this report. NB: Codes beginning with 'C' refer to Courses, not Units.

The Pass/Fail column should only be completed with 'Pass' or 'Fail' and should not be left blank.

If a centre submits complete evidence for a Unit, eg reading and listening assessments for the Understanding Language Unit, then the column Pass/Fail on the Verification Sample Form should be completed to show the overall outcome for the Unit, not for each individual assessment.

The judgement entered on the Verification Sample Form is for verification purposes and is not necessarily final as there might be an opportunity for a candidate to be re-assessed at a later stage if not already done.

How to complete the Candidate Evidence Flyleaf

Centres should enter:

♦ 'Complete' when both elements for one Unit are included, eg when reading and listening for the Understanding Language Unit are submitted. Note that 'Complete' does not necessarily mean 'Final'; a candidate could be re-assessed at a later stage if not already done at that level.
♦ 'Interim' when a single element from a Unit is included; eg only the reading element of the Understanding Language Unit is included.
♦ 'Mixed' when elements of two Units are combined (eg reading and talking).

What evidence of internal verification and quality assurance should a centre send?

This could be a covering note explaining the process used (eg cross-marking, discussion on validity of centre-devised assessments at meetings) and a clear indication on the candidate scripts or on the candidate record form that the work was internally verified and the judgements agreed.

The internal verification/quality assurance arrangements could be modelled on a whole centre/local authority one, rather than one being developed for each subject to avoid duplication of systems.

Centres devising their internal verification procedures may find SQA's Internal Verification Toolkit helpful: www.sqa.org.uk/IVtoolkit.