NQ verification 2022–23 round 1

Qualification verification summary report

Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	**Computing Science**
Verification activity:	**Event**
Date published:	**April 2023**

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H21X 73	National 3	Building Digital Solutions
H222 73	National 3	Information Solutions
H223 74	National 4	Software Design and Development
H226 74	National 4	Information System Design and Development

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

All but two centres verified used SQA's unit assessment support packs for National 3 and National 4 units.

One centre modified an existing unit support pack for Building Digital Solutions (National 3). If centres modify existing SQA unit support packs, they must ensure that new assessments do not fall outwith the scope of the course.

This centre also included additional candidate evidence to support judgements made for Software Design and Development (National 4). If including additional evidence, centres must also submit the centre-produced assessment(s).

Another centre had devised their own assessments for Software Design and Development (National 4). These consisted of a timed question paper and a practical booklet. Neither allowed candidates to meet the assessment standards for outcome 1 or outcome 2, and the marking schemes contained errors.

Full details of SQA's free National Qualifications prior verification service are on our website. Centres are encouraged to make use of this service when developing their own assessments.

Assessment judgements

Almost all centres verified judged the evidence for National 3 and National 4 units in line with national standards.

Most centres submitted evidence for Information Systems Design and Development (National 4). Confusion over features and functionality for assessment standard 2.1 still exists. Features are what the information system 'has', while functions are what the system 'does'.

It is not sufficient to simply name a security risk for Information Systems Design and Development (National 4) assessment standard 2.3, candidates must also describe the risk. 'Copyright' was also incorrectly accepted as a security risk for assessment standard 2.3.

Using internal commentary as evidence for outcome 1 in Software Design and Development (National 4) continues to be problematic. Candidate comments lacked the appropriate level of depth. Comments must accurately reflect the coding constructs and variable types, describing 'how' they are being used, rather than simply indicating that they are being used.

If centres are using observation or oral questioning to assess, evidence must include assessor comments and other relevant evidence that clearly shows the basis on which the assessment judgements were made.

Section 3: general comments

The increased number of centres with 'Accepted' outcomes is encouraging.

The very few 'Not Accepted' were almost all due to lack of sufficient evidence to allow verification to proceed. When submitting interim evidence, centres should follow the guidance available for National Qualifications external verification on SQA's website. These guidelines specify the minimum requirements. For example, units with six assessment standards require evidence from a minimum of four assessment standards, across the sample of candidate evidence. Units with five assessment standards require evidence for at least three standards across the sample.

Lots of good internal assessment and verification practice was evident. For example, most centres provided useful and effective feedback to individual candidates, as shown in the candidate assessment records. It was also useful to have a brief explanation why the assessment judgements had been made.

In almost all centres, both the assessor and internal verifier had made annotations on either the record sheet or candidate evidence. This gives a clear overview of the final assessment judgements.