NQ verification 2022–23 round 1

Qualification verification summary report

Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	**Geography**
Verification activity:	**Event**
Date published:	**April 2023**

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H27G 73	National 3	Geography: Physical Environments
H27H 73	National 3	Geography: Human Environments
H27J 73	National 3	Geography: Global Issues
H27G 74	National 4	Geography: Physical Environments
H27H 74	National 4	Geography: Human Environments
H27J 74	National 4	Geography: Global Issues

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Many centres used SQA unit assessment support packs and current prior verified assessments. Some centres devised their own assessments to meet the needs of candidates, and to use Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of the local area.

Submissions from centres were mainly separate unit approaches and included interim and complete unit evidence. All the interim evidence submitted had sufficient assessment standards included to allow verification to proceed.

Assessments were mainly written test submissions. A small number of centres used an 'open book' approach to assessment. This is an acceptable approach for gathering evidence.

Since the beginning of session 2016–17, centres have been required to assess candidates against the revised outcomes and assessment standards. To help centres, the SQA unit assessment support packs, currently published on SQA's secure site, were updated to take

account of these revisions and to ensure that the packs are valid. Centres should assess candidate evidence as outlined in the judging evidence tables in these packs.

Centres should ensure that any prior verified assessments they are using are current and in line with the revised outcomes and assessment standards. Prior verified assessments are no longer valid after a unit has been revised. The prior verified assessments on SQA's website are all current and valid. A number of prior verified assessments were removed from SQA's secure site following the revisions in 2016. These are listed below the current assessments and should no longer be used by centres.

Advice for centres:

♦ centres should check that any assessments they have had prior verified are dated after the revisions of 2016
♦ when centres devise their own assessment tasks, they must include both the assessment task and the judging evidence table, which must include the 'possible responses'
♦ prior verification is a free service provided by SQA and centres are encouraged to use this service for centre-devised assessments

Assessment judgements

Almost all assessment judgements were in line with national standards.

Centres are only required to submit evidence for one unit per candidate at each level. Only one unit is verified for each candidate at the external verification event. A small number of centres included evidence for two or three units.

There was less over-assessment this year. Each assessment standard needs to be assessed once only. While it is understood that asking two questions about an assessment standard can reduce the need for re-assessment, this strategy should be used proportionately so as not to make the process too burdensome for both candidates and assessors.

It is helpful if assessors indicate where the candidate has overtaken an assessment standard across the entirety of the candidate's evidence and not just at the first applicable comment. Candidates may overtake assessment standards in more than one place in their evidence and this should be identified and credited wherever it occurs.

It was helpful, for verification, when ticks were placed at points on candidates' work where an assessment standard was overtaken. This helps external verifiers to locate the evidence in candidates' work. Nearly all centres used this approach.

The following good practice was identified during verification:

♦ many centres included detailed and helpful comments about assessment judgements; this helps external verifiers to locate and review the evidence in candidates' work
♦ most centres indicated on candidates' work where assessment standards were overtaken, for example the use of 1.1, 1.2

- the use of 'd' for description and 'e' for explanation was increasingly used by centres in this round of verification
- many centres included a summary grid to indicate which assessment standards had been overtaken by each candidate. The comments made by assessors were detailed and informative, which helped to make external verification more straightforward. These comments were often helpful for candidates also
- one centre placed coloured boxes around the precise words where candidates overtook an assessment standard, which was very helpful to verifiers
- the candidate assessment record was effectively used by most centres
- re-assessment of assessment standards was clearly indicated on candidates' work
- where candidate evidence was generated by fieldwork, orally or via presentations, assessors included notes to indicate what the candidate had done or said to overtake the assessment standard

Section 3: general comments

Almost all centres were 'accepted' or 'accepted*' in this round of verification. The high quality of the submissions made the verification process straightforward. Centres are to be commended on their time, effort and organisation of submissions.

Many centres had clear internal verification policies to show how quality assurance ensures national standards had been applied. These were effective as they provided the centre with a clear and systematic process. A small number of centres, however, did not include any evidence of internal verification of candidate evidence. Centres should always include evidence of internal verification processes along with candidate evidence. This may be in the documentation provided or in written comments on candidates' work. Quality assurance templates were devised by some centres to give a clear staged protocol for quality assurance.

The verification sample form was completed appropriately by most centres. If evidence is interim, centres should indicate if the candidate has an interim pass or interim fail. An interim pass is when candidates have passed all the assessment standards completed but still have other assessment standards to attempt.

Centres should ensure that the pass or fail result on the verification sample form matches the results written by assessors on the candidate evidence.

Reasons for the 'not accepted' outcomes were as follows:

- not providing assessment judgements on the candidate evidence. The purpose of verification is to confirm a centre's assessment judgements. In this situation centres that do not include their assessment judgements are asked to provide information about which assessment standards each candidate has passed or failed
- using a task from a unit assessment support pack from SQA's secure site but a judging evidence table from a different unit assessment support pack, making assessment judgements inaccurate. In this situation, centres will be asked to judge the evidence using the correct judging evidence table

- using a prior verified National 4 Physical Environments assessment which is no longer valid and has been removed from SQA's secure site. This caused assessment standard 1.2 'Presenting geographical information in at least two straightforward ways, one of which must be related to a map' to be assessed without a presenting method related to a map. In this situation, a centre will be asked to re-assess all candidates so that candidates can present information relating to a map