



Qualification Verification Summary Report

NQ Verification 2019–20

01 Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Physics
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2020

National Courses/Units verified:

H256 73 National 3 Electricity and Energy
H258 73 National 3 Dynamics and Space
H256 74 National 4 Electricity and Energy
H258 74 National 4 Dynamics and Space
H25A 74 National 4 Waves and Radiation

02 Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The unit assessment support packs (UASPs), produced by SQA, were used by all centres that were externally verified this year. All centres used the unit-by-unit approach to assess the candidates. The majority of centres submitted evidence for outcome 2 only.

Centres are reminded to use the most recent unit assessment support packs and the appropriate evidence requirements.

Where centres choose to take a holistic approach using the original UASP assessment, they should follow the advice given at the bottom of the judging evidence tables, within the relevant UASP. This advice states clearly that the original assessment instrument must be adapted for use in this way, to include further calculation-based questions. All additional questions should follow the [Physics General Marking Principles](#).

Simply allocating marks to the UASP and applying a 50% cut-off score, without the addition of extra calculation-based questions, is not permitted.

Additionally, centres must not use the original UASPs by allocating a single mark to each question and applying a 50% cut-off score.

Centres can still use the original assessment instrument, along with the original marking guidance as long as they assess both assessment standards 2.1 and 2.2 independently.

Some centres assessed assessment standards 2.1 and 2.2 independently but had calculated a total mark for all the problem-solving questions. With this total, they applied a 50% cut-off on the total, even when it was clear that each of the problem-solving types had not been passed. Where assessment standards 2.1 and 2.2 are being assessed independently, each problem-solving skill must be evidenced for the assessment standard to be achieved.

Centres are reminded that holistic tests to use for assessing outcome 2 were published for National 4 Physics and are available on SQA's secure website. These tests have marks allocated appropriately and a cut-off score. Centres are also reminded that these tests are for use as a single assessment and must not be split. Questions from these assessments must not be extracted for use in other tests.

The holistic outcome 2 tests must not be converted by allocating single marks to each question so they can assess the assessment standards independently.

All centres assessed outcome 2, with a limited number of the centres including evidence for outcome 1. If a centre indicates on the Verification Sample Form that the candidate has passed the unit but does not clearly show that this was interim evidence on the candidate flyleaf, then it is assumed that the pass was for the whole unit. For a complete unit, evidence for both outcome 1 and outcome 2 is required.

Assessment judgements

A large number of centres annotated candidate evidence clearly to show where the assessment standards had been achieved. The majority of assessment judgements were accurate and reliable. Most centres submitted candidate record sheets showing the assessment decisions, which aided the external verification process.

Outcome 1

When a centre has stated that a unit is complete, an outcome 1 report must be included for external verification purposes.

Assessment judgements for outcome 1 were less reliable than for outcome 2.

Centres are reminded that in assessing outcome 1, it is vital that the judging evidence tables contained in the unit assessment support packs are used to ensure that all aspects of a particular assessment standard have been achieved. When selecting an experiment to carry out and assess outcome 1, centres should ensure that the experiment draws on knowledge and understanding from a key area of the unit or course at that particular level.

For assessment standard 1.4, candidates who select to draw a graph should be encouraged to use an appropriate scale to allow ease of plotting, and for the verification process.

Outcome 2

Centres should refer to [Physics: general marking principles](#) when making assessment decisions and apply these consistently to every assessment instrument.

Where a question requires units to be included in the answer, the units must be correct. When the units are given in the question, a correct response would still require units. The exception to this is where a candidate is completing a table by entering a value and the units are already included in the column headings.

With the application of an effective internal verification process, any minor marking issues will be identified and corrected within the centre. This should allow the marking guidance to be applied consistently to all candidates' evidence.

It is also important that the centre applies its internal verification procedures and clearly demonstrates what the final decision is, where there is any disagreement between the original assessor and the internal verifier.

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Section 3: General comments

This session, centres were either selected for verification in Physics for units at National 3 or National 4. The vast majority of centres were found to be using a valid approach and made reliable assessment decisions.

Some centres submitted candidate evidence for more than one unit at a particular level. Centres are only required to submit candidate evidence for one unit, with the addition of another unit's evidence where an assessment standard has been achieved over the two units. A centre is free to choose which unit to submit candidate evidence for at each level. The centre should choose the same unit for all candidates at any one level where possible, but it can choose different units for different levels.

Some centres had applied a 50% cut-off score for either the whole of outcome 2 or for both assessment standards 2.1 and 2.2 while using a single mark for each of the candidate's responses. This is not a valid method and should not be applied. Centres are advised to use the most up-to-date unit assessments

published by SQA as these have been written as holistic assessment instruments.

Almost all centres submitted candidate evidence that had been internally verified. For external verification purposes, evidence should be supplied to demonstrate the internal verification process, not only in the provision of a centre/department policy but on the effective application of the policy to the candidates' work.

Centres should record clear assessment decisions on all evidence submitted and on the overall recording system, to allow effective internal and external verification. Where the internal verification leads to a difference of opinion, the final decision must be made clear. For some evidence submitted, it the final decision was not clear.