



Qualification Verification Summary Report

NQ Verification 2019–20

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Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Practical Cookery
Verification event/visiting information	Event and Visiting
Date published:	June 2020

National Courses/Units verified:

Unit code	Level	Unit title
H20H 73	National 3	Cookery Skills, Techniques and Processes
H20L 73	National 3	Understanding and Using Ingredients
H20M 73	National 3	Organisational Skills for Cooking
C877 75	National 5	Practical Cookery

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

This year the COVID-19 pandemic heavily impacted on verification activities, so unfortunately, we were unable to verify as many centres as initially planned. Round 1 was relatively unaffected but Round 2 was greatly affected and only a small number of centres were visited. This has resulted in a limited amount of information being available to share at this time.

National 3 — units

This year, all centres chose the unit-by-unit assessment approach.

All centres made good use of the unit assessment support pack materials. Some adapted recipes into a pictorial format, which was acceptable as the actual assessment content had not been altered.

The recording documents for each unit, at each level, are very similar and, on completion of the candidate assessment, it is good practice that the following documents are included, signed and dated:

- ◆ a completed assessor checklist of candidate attainment
- ◆ a completed candidate worksheet/workbook (assessed)
- ◆ other relevant evidence, for example a centre-devised observational checklist/marketing scheme that recognises the candidate's achievement of each assessment standard, in a practical activity

Candidate checklists are not required for verification purposes and should not be submitted as evidence. This year there were several administrative errors when completing these forms so extra care should be taken to ensure validity.

Recording documents

Most centres now choose to record candidate performance on the assessor's checklist of candidate attainment. These were completed with good detail and were personalised to record the performance of each candidate.

Using this written evidence, assessors should be able to relate to how the candidate has met the assessment standard. This record may be in addition to comments on the candidate's worksheet or workbook. If photographic evidence is included in candidate evidence, then only brief comments are required on the checklist of candidate attainment. However, if no photographic evidence is available, then a more detailed assessor's checklist of candidate attainment must be provided, to give a clear idea of the assessor's observations and professional judgement of how the candidate met the assessment standards.

Photographic evidence was good this year. However, some centres referred to photographs but then did not include them. Centres are also reminded that photographs should match the assessor's commentary of candidate attainment. Photographs should be of the candidates' work, not the candidates themselves.

National 5 — Course assessment

All centres visited used the recipes provided by SQA to carry out the practical activity.

Centres must ensure they are familiar with the 'Centre Instructions for Assessment' and holistic marking as there are still several centres who appear unfamiliar with these guidelines. Assessors should ensure they are familiar with the assessment arrangements prior to commencing marking. There is also a requirement that centres have two available reserve candidates on the day of the practical activity where possible. This worked well in centres with candidate absence.

Extra ingredients were available in all centres for candidates who needed them during the assessment, and this was noted as a great improvement on previous years.

Holistic marking instructions were also provided, and most centres produced their own recording grids to implement them. Centre staff are becoming more confident in applying the holistic marking instructions effectively. However, there are still a few centres adopting a one-mark-by-one-mark approach with their grids. Centres are reminded that this style of marking is not deemed to be holistic and must not be used.

The planning stage of the assessment, identified as the assignment, and under normal circumstances marked by SQA, should be copied and the originals retained by centre staff for submission to SQA. The copies should then be returned to candidates, for amending if necessary, prior to the practical activity.

It is the centre's responsibility to provide support and ensure a candidate's plan is workable, contains essential tasks, a correction of timings, and service details as detailed in the recipes, enabling them to undertake the practical element of the assessment logically. This however did not happen in all centres, which can leave some candidates at a disadvantage.

Logical sequencing is a key factor in the workability of a time plan. Where possible, the candidate's own time plan should be amended to ensure it is workable. If at this stage the assessor feels a candidate's time plan is still unworkable, even after assessor input, it is only at this point that a candidate should be given a centre-devised time plan. Candidates should have their time plan visible throughout the practical activity. Under no circumstances should candidates be given a centre time plan because it is deemed better than their own. If a candidate does, however, need to use a centre-devised time plan, they should be given adequate time to familiar themselves with it.

Assessment judgements

National 3 — units

Centres submitted very detailed evidence as to why judgements were made, which aided the verification process considerably. This is an improvement on previous years.

Assessors are reminded that candidates are expected to serve the whole of their dish and not just one portion. Also, a polystyrene container is not a suitable material for heating prior to service.

National 5 — course assessment

Implementing stage

Centres that were able to carry out the implementation stage reported the recipes to be fair and achievable the time permitted, with most candidates able to serve all three courses on time and to a good standard.

Weighing and measuring marks allocated within the course of the practical activity are still causing confusion for some assessors. The four marks available are judged and awarded against those ingredients listed on the ingredients list as

prepared weight/prepared volume. To achieve these marks, candidates must be seen to be weighing or measuring these specific ingredients during the practical activity, and not just during the preparation time.

03 Section 3: General comments

National 3 — units

Each year there is an improvement in the ways that centres are carrying out internal verification. However, there are still several errors not being picked up by internal verifiers. Centres are reminded that internal verification needs to be rigorous, reliable and fair, so that any anomalies are highlighted. Some centres need to review their internal verification procedures to ensure they are effective.

SQA's [NQ Internal Verification Toolkit](#) offers a possible approach. A minimum of 25% of all materials should be internally verified, and it is good practice for a centre to submit a copy of its internal verification policy with candidate materials.

More centres submitted photographic evidence of candidates' finished results, which is good practice and can reduce the amount of written commentary required by assessors. It is, however, essential that the assessor's comments match the evidence in the photograph. This message has not changed from previous years.

Visiting verification

Good practice would be for centre staff not to assess their own candidates, and, if possible, to plan with colleagues to assess each other's candidates, where possible.

This year saw an increase in the number of centres with an effective internal verification policy. Centre staff are, however, reminded that there is no requirement to internally verify a candidate's assignment, as under normal circumstances these are submitted to SQA for marking. This activity should therefore not form part of your internal verification policy.

National 5 — course assessment

All candidates visited this year were suitably prepared for this level. All centres visited had developed a centre time plan for use in exceptional circumstances. Centres were well prepared for candidates with the provision of sufficient ingredients and appropriate equipment.

Centre staff must ensure time plans and service details (assignments), have been checked and amended to ensure workability prior to commencing the practical activity.

Finally, centres are reminded that visiting verification is intended to support centres' assessment of candidates, and to ensure national standards are understood by all who deliver the courses. This year has been no ordinary year

and has seen many centre staff work very hard to ensure candidates achieve the marks they deserve, and this has been very much appreciated. In these ever-changing times there is no doubt we will continue to work together as best we can for our candidates.