



NQ Verification 2021–22 Round 2

Qualification Verification Summary Report

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Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name: Spanish
Verification event/visiting information: Event
Date published: June 2022

National Courses verified:

C869 75	National 5	Spanish: performance–talking (IACCA*)
C869 76	Higher	Spanish: performance–talking (IACCA)

*Internally-assessed component of course assessment

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Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment Approaches

All centres verified in round 2 used the SQA course assessment task for the performance–talking to assess candidates at National 5 and Higher.

Verifiers noted that the quality of the performances sampled at both levels was generally good. Assessors had guided candidates well in the selection of their topics, and in many performances, these allowed candidates to employ a range of structures, vocabulary and tenses appropriate to each level.

Digital uploads of verification materials were generally successful, with a good range of supporting evidence submitted. This allowed for a concise verification process.

National 5 Presentation subsection

Many presentations evidenced well-organised and appropriate content, and candidates were generally more accurate in this subsection of the performance–talking. Centres should remind candidates to avoid listing (nouns in particular) at National 5, and they should encourage candidates to take their time in the delivery of their presentation.

National 5 Conversation subsection/Higher discussion

Assessors were very supportive of their candidates and prompted at appropriate points during the conversation/discussion where hesitation occurred. Some performances were characterised by good use of interjections and connectors, although centres could encourage candidates to employ a variety of interjections and ways of seeking clarification (in Spanish).

Open-ended questions were effective in producing detailed/detailed and complex language from candidates, but an over-use of closed questions in some performances did not help candidates develop their answers. Assessors should avoid the repeated use of closed questions.

Assessors should always give candidates appropriate thinking time in the conversation/discussion so that they can formulate their own answers and, in some instances, correct themselves.

A few conversations/discussions would have benefitted from less quick intervention from the assessor, and centres are reminded that the assessor should not monopolise the conversation/discussion. Centres should refer to the course assessment structure: performance–talking (assessment conditions in particular) in the Modern Languages course specifications at both [National 5](#) and [Higher](#).

Candidates may attempt to use extended answers in places, but assessors are reminded to discourage candidates from answering with ‘mini-presentations’ or short monologues. Some of these longer answers can appear to be overly rehearsed and any sense of naturalness in the conversation/discussion is lost. Ideally, a variety of shorter and longer responses should be employed in the conversation/discussion.

Centres are reminded to provide candidates with a variety of questions, and to ensure that candidates at both levels are given the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to cope with an element of unpredictability.

Assessors should avoid using the same conversation/discussion questions for all candidates as this may mean candidates do not use a wide variety in language resource. Where candidates select similar topics for the performance-talking, centres should consider how to phrase conversation questions in a variety of ways or how to focus on different aspects of a same topic area with candidates.

Duration of the performance–talking

Centres are reminded to refer to the recommended duration of the performance–talking as set out in the [National 5](#) and [Higher](#) course specifications.

Some performances were too long at National 5, and this was not necessarily to the benefit of candidates. Other performances were significantly shorter than the recommended duration at both levels and, at times, this meant that candidates did not always have the scope to demonstrate their abilities in using

detailed/detailed and complex language and a wide enough variety of language structures.

Centres are reminded that at Higher the discussion must develop into at least one other context. Occasionally, the second context was only covered briefly, and this did not necessarily allow candidates to develop a range in language resource and to use different vocabulary and structures.

Assessment judgements

Most centres were 'accepted' and applied the marking instructions for the performance–talking reliably and in line with national standards. Some centres were too severe and some too lenient in their application of the marking instructions, and centres are encouraged to make use of the Understanding Standards materials for National 5 and Higher Spanish performance–talking (IACCA) published on the [SQA secure website](#).

Some performances went beyond the standards expected at National 5 and Higher. Weaker performances highlighted problems with grammatical accuracy and problems with intonation and pronunciation.

Centres generally provided very useful commentaries in relation to how decisions regarding marks were reached, and this was very useful to verifiers.

Centres are reminded that performances may be uneven and to expect some variation in the quality of performance, including within each pegged mark in the marking instructions. All four performance aspects should be considered when marking the performance–talking: content, accuracy, language resource and interaction (conversation/discussion only). Performances should be marked positively and holistically, and do not have to be perfect to be awarded the highest marks.

Assessors are reminded to refer to the general marking instructions along with the detailed marking instructions (pegged marks) within [National 5](#) and [Higher](#) course specifications.

The marking of the presentation section at National 5 was generally more accurate than in the conversation, and centres are encouraged, where required, to undertake professional dialogue in relation to deciding marks to award in the conversation section. This can be useful where a conversation is uneven in quality and may correspond to more than one pegged mark descriptor.

On some occasions, centres were too severe in the application of the marking instructions in relation to 'sustaining the conversation'. It is worthwhile noting that candidates do not have to ask questions and may demonstrate the ability to recover from hesitation, for example, and still achieve full marks in this section.

Section 3: General comments

National 5 and Higher performance–talking

At National 5, personalisation and choice should ensure that candidates select topic(s) of their choice for their presentation and conversation. Assessors should support and advise candidates in their choice of topic(s) from within the four contexts in the Modern Languages course.

Candidates can talk about different aspects of one or more topic(s) developed from the same context. Centres are reminded that at National 5, candidates must cover a different context in the conversation to that covered in the presentation. At Higher, candidates must cover at least two different contexts in the discussion. This is outlined in the course assessment structure: performance–talking ('performance–talking overview') in the course specifications for [National 5](#) and [Higher](#) Modern Languages.

Pronunciation and intonation continue to be something verifiers comment on. These can detract from the overall impression in some performances and can affect the level of accuracy in delivery. This should be an area for continued focus in learning and teaching.

Recordings

Centres are reminded that they must ensure all recordings are audible and playable on all devices. Some recordings were not immediately playable or were missing. Detailed notes of recordings without the corresponding audio files are insufficient for external verification to proceed.

Background noise should be avoided where assessments are being completed close to other classrooms or social spaces.

Assessors should be dissuaded from note taking during candidate performances, as this could be off-putting for the candidates.

It was encouraging to hear very considerate and reassuring assessors who supported the candidates throughout their performances.

Marks

For verification to proceed, centres must provide the marks awarded for each subsection of the performance–talking at National 5 (presentation, conversation, sustaining the conversation), along with a total out of 30 marks. A total out of 30 marks for the Higher discussion must be provided.

Centres must also insert the total mark for each candidate's performance–talking in the 'Mark (centre use)' column on the verification sample form.

Internal verification

Most centres produced sample materials which were well-organised and showed evidence of internal verification. It is always useful in the external verification

process when centres include detail (for example, on a candidate assessment record or equivalent) to explain the reasons why a candidate was awarded one pegged mark rather than another for any section of the performance–talking.

Good practice of internal verification activity across clusters was seen and is to be encouraged for smaller or single person departments.