Qualification Verification Summary Report
NQ Verification 2018–19

01 ▸ Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	**Administration and IT**
Verification event/visiting information	**Event**
Date published:	**June 2019**

National Courses/Units verified:

H201 74   National 4   Administration and IT Assignment — added value unit
H1YW 75   SCQF level 5   IT Solutions for Administrators
H1YY 75   SCQF level 5   Communication in Administration
H4KB 76   SCQF level 6   Administrative Theory and Practice
H1YW 76   SCQF level 6   IT Solutions for Administrators
H1YY 76   SCQF level 6   Communication in Administration

02 ▸ Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The approaches to assessment were valid in all centres that were verified. All centres that used SQA unit assessment support packs (UASPs) used them accurately and consistently.

Across the centres sampled for the added value unit, all three packs were used: Island Secondary School, Youth Beat and Eagle Eye.

Across the centres sampled for SCQF level 5 and 6 units, centres used packages 1, 2 and 3. Package 4: portfolio approach was not used by any of the centres sampled.

The following examples of good practice were observed:

♦ Many centres had a strong internal verification policy, documenting their approach to quality assurance.

♦ Many centres demonstrated good practice in their internal verification processes, for example: holding internal verification meetings/discussions; collegiate working with past nominees; use of different-coloured pens to annotate scripts when cross-marking; cross-marking initialled by the assessor and internal verifier.

♦ Candidate evidence from many centres was well presented, tasks clearly labelled and assessment approaches included along with the judging evidence table.

The following comments are intended as a guide to centres on future practice:

♦ Centres should ensure there are robust quality assurance measures in place for marking assessments. Centres should refer to *Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres offering SQA Qualifications* (February 2011).

♦ Centres must submit an internal verification/moderation/quality assurance policy when selected for external verification.

♦ SQA has produced an Internal Verification Toolkit which provides advice and support on designing and implementing the best model and approach to internal verification depending on your subject, centre and candidate needs. It can be found at: www.sqa.org.uk/IVtoolkit.

♦ All centres should use the most up-to-date version of the UASPs which are available on SQA's secure website.

♦ If centres significantly amend a UASP or use a centre-devised assessment, they should use the SQA free prior verification service to ensure assessment materials are fit for purpose and give every candidate the opportunity to meet the assessment standards.

Assessment judgements

The majority of evidence submitted was of a good standard which indicated that centres had prepared candidates well for the assessment. Generally, centres marked assessments accurately, showing they had a clear understanding of the requirements of each assessment standard and applying these accurately to the judging of unit assessment evidence.

However, there a number of points to highlight. The following comments are intended as a guide to improve centre practice.

Keyboarding errors

Centres must check candidate work thoroughly for keyboarding and layout errors. All keyboarding and spacing errors must be indicated on candidate printouts. These errors need to be counted to ensure the candidate is not over the error tolerance for the task.

The error tolerance for each level is:

♦ SCQF level 4: 1 error for every 15 words
♦ SCQF level 5: 1 error for every 20 words
♦ SCQF level 6: 1 error for every 25 words

Errors can appear anywhere in the task. Examples of errors that are included within the tolerance are: typing errors; minor layout errors (eg reference and date in wrong place); and spacing errors (eg one return between paragraphs, inconsistent or incorrect spacing in an e-mail). There is flexibility over layouts but a sensible business layout must be used.

Each of the following would be treated as one error no matter how often they occur in the task:

♦ incorrect/inconsistent capitalisation
♦ incorrect/inconsistent spacing after punctuation at end of sentence
♦ incorrect/inconsistent spacing for commas, colons, semi-colons, brackets
♦ incorrect/inconsistent spacing between paragraphs
♦ confusion of hyphen/dash
♦ omission of apostrophe
♦ highlighted punctuation at the end of a heading
♦ missing full stops

Keyboarding errors were commonly missed on word processing, desktop publishing and e-mail tasks. Common errors not identified by assessors were:

♦ inconsistent capitalisation
♦ incorrect punctuation
♦ layout/spacing errors

Some centres had not identified any keyboarding errors on candidate work. Both the assessor and internal verifier need to be diligent in checking candidate evidence for errors to ensure they are making correct assessment judgements. If there is a keyboarding error in a key piece of information which results in the document not being fit for purpose, the candidate has not achieved the assessment standard.

Marking candidate work

In some cases assessors had not marked candidate printouts at all or had just given the whole printout one tick at the bottom of the page, making it very difficult for the external verifier to understand where and why a pass or fail was awarded. Assessors must clearly mark on candidate scripts where the candidate has, or has not, actioned instructions and where the candidate has made any errors that are included in the error tolerance for the task.
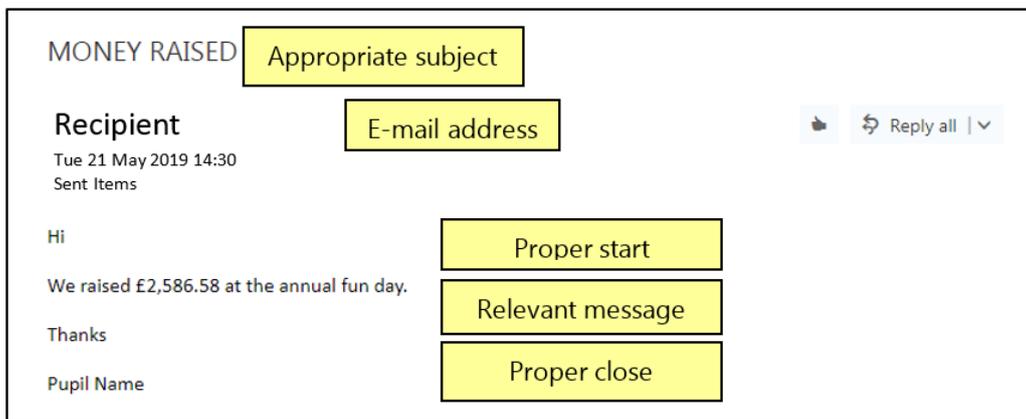
E-mail

Many candidates had poor structure to their e-mails. All e-mails should have a professional structure:

♦ a subject
♦ a proper start, eg Hi or Hello
♦ a sensible, relevant message
♦ a proper close, eg Thanks or Regards

Many candidates also had inappropriate punctuation in their e-mail, eg commas after Hi and Regards. This is to be counted as one keyboarding error. All keyboarding and layout errors should be counted to ensure the candidate is not over the error tolerance for the number of words in their e-mail.

Below is an example of a professional e-mail layout:

When candidates print their e-mail, they must print evidence that proves the e-mail has been sent. With most e-mail systems, printing from the candidate's sent folder is sufficient because most e-mail systems will print with the date and time the candidate sent the e-mail (as seen above). If the centre's e-mail system does not print the date and time the e-mail was sent, an additional screenshot of the e-mail in the sent folder should be provided along with a printout of the actual e-mail.

E-diary

If the printout of the view requested in the task truncates recorded event(s), then extra printouts of the event(s) must be provided, so that keyboarding and exact times can be checked. A screenshot is acceptable as long as it is clear from the screenshot that an e-diary has been used and presents all the information needed for proof that the printout meets the requirements of the task.

If an event requires the e-diary entry to be recorded as an 'all day' event, the e-diary function for 'all day' must be used.

Date format

If a task requires a date, candidates must always include the year otherwise this is counted as one keyboarding error across a task. Examples of acceptable date formats are listed below:

9 May 2019	09/05/2019
9th May 2019	9/5/19
09 May 2019	May 9 2019
Do not accept 'the 9th of May 2019'	
Do not accept American number date format	

Consistency within a document is essential. If candidates have more than one date format within a document, this must be underlined and counted as one keyboarding error.

If an e-file given to a candidate has already used a particular date format, candidates should continue to use the same date format, otherwise the date format is inconsistent and should be counted as one keyboarding error.

Time format

Examples of acceptable time formats are shown below:

1000 hours	1000hrs	10 am	10am
10:00 hours	10.00 hrs	10.00 am	10.00am
Do not accept a.m. or p.m.			

Consistency within a document is essential. If candidates have more than one time format within a document, this must be underlined and counted as one keyboarding error.

If an e-file given to a candidate has already used a particular time format, candidates should continue to use the same time format, otherwise the time format is inconsistent and should be counted as one keyboarding error.

Spreadsheet formulae

The SUM function should only be used when adding a cell range, eg =SUM(B3:B4). It should not be used with the + symbol, or when subtracting, multiplying or dividing.

If a candidate uses the SUM function incorrectly, this should not be accepted and the candidate has therefore not achieved the corresponding assessment standard.

Re-assessment

If a candidate has not achieved an assessment standard they can be re-assessed. The candidate must be given a different assessment task for the re-assessment.

Administrative Practices (SCQF level 5) and Administrative Theory and Practice (SCQF level 6)

Many candidates still have difficulty with theory assessment standards. Often candidates would identify rather than outline if the assessment standard was 'outline', and outline rather than describe if the assessment standard was 'describe'. If a candidate has not provided the correct level of detail for the command word in the task, then the candidate has not achieved the assessment standard.

Combined approach (package 3)

A number of centres used the combined approach. Centres are reminded that with the combined approach, the theory assessment standards are often assessed in the same task as IT-related assessment standards. This means keyboarding must be marked in theory answers. Assessors must identify all keyboarding errors on the candidate's printout. If a candidate is over the error tolerance for that task, they can still pass the theory assessment standards if their answers are correct, however they would fail the IT-related assessment standards.

Name on printouts

Candidates should include their name and task number on each printout they submit.

Record sheets

A small number of centres had inconsistencies between the marking on candidate printouts and what was recorded on the candidate's assessment record sheet. For example, the assessor's marking on the candidate's actual printout clearly showing that the candidate has failed the assessment standard(s), yet recording the candidate as a pass for the corresponding assessment standard(s) on their record sheet. Centres are advised to exercise due diligence when marking and recording assessment judgements.

03 ▶ Section 3: General comments

It was clear that many centres had made a concerted effort to ensure the standards had been consistently applied.

We would continue to encourage all centres to read the assessment standards carefully along with the information for judging evidence and to check candidate evidence thoroughly against these standards.

All centres are reminded that the column for pass or fail on the candidate sample form should be completed with their assessment judgement. There are only two options for this column — pass or fail. This column is to record the overall final assessment judgement for the evidence that has been included for each candidate. It is not a final judgement on their passing or failing the whole unit. Even if interim evidence has been submitted for a candidate, and that candidate has passed all the assessment standards for the evidence they have submitted, they should be recorded as a 'pass' in this column.