



**National Qualifications 2015
Internal Assessment Report
Social Sciences Bacalaureate**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified:

Social Sciences Baccalaureate: Interdisciplinary Project

General comments

This is the third year of delivery of the Interdisciplinary Project Unit in Social Sciences. Eight candidates undertook the Interdisciplinary Project from five centres, all of which also presented candidates for at least one of the other Interdisciplinary Project curricular areas. All presenting centres were subject to external verification, and all centre assessment decisions were judged to be in line with national standards.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All centres presenting this year have previously presented candidates in either Social Science or other curricular areas, meaning that they already have a sound knowledge and experience of national standards, as demonstrated by the 100% accuracy of grading. Most centres already have a well-developed mechanism for assessment and internal verification.

At the Quality Forum events, centre representatives demonstrated their knowledge of the specifications for the unit. They made valuable contributions to discussions and appreciated the opportunity to interact with External Verifiers and assessors from other centres to further develop their knowledge. All centres had made good use of the exemplar material available on the SQA website, and this had been accessed by most candidates. The centre representatives commented on the usefulness of this material for both themselves and their candidates.

The Quality Forum event also provides centre representatives an opportunity to explain assessment and internal verification procedures within their centre and discuss these with the External Verifier.

Evidence Requirements

All centres have an excellent understanding of the Evidence Requirements for the unit. Assessor Reports for each candidate and all mandatory pieces of candidate evidence were submitted. External Verifiers commented on the quality of evidence produced by candidates who completed some creative and interesting projects covering a wide range of current issues. Additional charts or spread sheets referring to timelines were all included, and External Verifiers commented on the creativity of some candidates in adapting the templates to show their timescales.

All Assessor Reports were completed in full. The quality of the comments varied, though was mostly very good. The assessor comments were very useful during the verification events and External Verifiers have given feedback commending centres on the helpfulness of these comments in understanding how grading decisions had been reached.

Administration of assessments

Many centres have well-developed and robust approaches to the internal verification process with a wide variety of approaches in evidence. With all centres presenting in several curricular areas, there are some excellent examples of inter-departmental verification of projects across subject areas within a centre. This approach provides excellent support and robustness in the making of grading decisions.

Most Assessor Reports contained high quality comments which were very helpful to the external verification process. However, centres should ensure that comments in the Assessor Report are directed at verifiers, both internal and external, and not to the candidate.

Areas of good practice

Assessors have been commended by the External Verifiers for the quality of feedback given to candidates. Giving positive feedback in the initial stages of the project is vital to the candidate and helps their motivation.

Candidates continue to be creative in their use of technology in a variety of ways to help them gather information or contact sources. Innovative presentation methods also reflect creativity in this area.

Project themes were innovative and original, many based on current issues such as the Independence referendum, engagement in politics, and immigration.

Many centres have developed a team approach to their delivery and support of the Interdisciplinary Project. This approach helps create capacity within the centre, and helps maintain expertise within the centre when staffing changes occur. This approach is to be commended.

Most projects are very clearly interdisciplinary, which makes it much easier for candidates to access all assessment criteria. Candidates should be encouraged to ensure that their projects have several related pathways within their objectives which will allow them to meet the assessment requirements

Specific areas for improvement

Projects titles could be improved to better reflect the objectives of the project. Candidates should show the interdisciplinary nature of their project through a good descriptive title. Some candidates are using titles that are very similar to common Modern Studies essay/research questions, which could restrict their ability to meet all criteria.

The completion of the Evaluation of projects was mostly carried out to a high standard, but candidates should be encouraged to use the prompts in the templates when completing them, providing evidence from their project to support their input.

Candidates should be encouraged to be clearer in the Resources and Research Methodologies section of the Plan to distinguish between them better.

Centres should ensure that the dates of signatures correspond to the time of signing and not time of printing.