



Alternative Certification Model 2020–21: National QA Exercise Key Messages

Subject	RMPS
Level	Advanced Higher

This report provides information on themes emerging from the national quality assurance exercise, which is part of the Alternative Certification Model for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses.

A sample of candidates' assessed work from selected centres was reviewed to determine whether assessment was in line with the national standard. The evidence submitted may have been partial or incomplete and is unlikely to have represented all of the evidence that will be gathered to allow the centre to determine a provisional result.

The centres selected for review in this subject and at this level have been provided with specific feedback on the evidence that they submitted. The comments below highlight key points about the assessment approaches and instruments used and the sampled centres' assessment judgements, for all centres delivering the subject at this level to reflect upon and make any appropriate adjustments.

Section 1: Comments on approach to assessment

The volume of evidence submitted by centres was variable. Some centres submitted question paper assessments only. Other centres also included project-dissertations and a range of evidence.

On the whole, centres have made effective use of the SQA 2021 NQ assessment resource. A few centres had devised their own assessments using a range of SQA past papers that had appropriate course coverage and level of demand. Overall, the approach to assessment was in accordance with SQA's guidance on gathering key evidence.

Centres mostly made good use of the SQA 2021 NQ assessment resource, the specimen question paper, and the course specification to create a range of appropriate source-based questions. It is important that the length of source is similar to the examples given, and to use the wording of the course specification in the 'describe' questions. This avoids increasing the level of demand and accessibility for grade C candidates. Centres following the same approach should take account of this when making and reflecting on assessment judgements.

Section 2: Comments on assessment judgements

The majority of centres' assessment judgements were valid, reliable and in line with national standards. However, there were instances where holistic marking instructions had been applied too leniently, or centres had marked point-by-point rather than holistically. Centres need to be clear about where they are awarding the marks and what the specific marks being awarded are, using the holistic marking instructions. There was clear evidence of effective internal moderation procedures in the centres and local authorities.

There was clear evidence that teachers are working hard to develop and to encourage the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for this course.

It was good to see that teachers and candidates have positively engaged with the source-based questions, that judgements, on the whole, were accurate, and that candidates were meeting the standards of attainment.

Candidates need to choose a question for their project–dissertations carefully, as they are aiming to answer that question. Candidates need to have clear, specific aims that are relevant to their question to access the full range of marks. Teachers need to be aware of this aspect of the marking instructions when making assessment judgements.