



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

Subject	Art and Design
Level	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

There were variations in the quantity of candidate evidence, across the three components of the Higher course. Less than 50% of centres sent candidate evidence for all three components.

Question paper evidence was submitted most frequently across the centres reviewed. Several centres had used the SQA NQ 2021 question paper and marking instructions; others had devised their own paper and marking instructions, using past paper and/or centre devised questions. Both approaches, in the majority of centres, were valid and reliable as an assessment instrument.

There was clear evidence that the majority of centres referred to the SQA expressive and design assessment task documents when assessing candidates' work, and many included a breakdown of the marks allocated against each mark range descriptor.

A few centres sent small samples of portfolio evidence that provided evidence of only one section of the detailed marking instructions, which limited the scope for review.

Expressive and design portfolio evidence clearly demonstrated an understanding of the requirements of the course in many centres.

Centres submitted more assessed evidence for the expressive portfolio component than for the design portfolio component. Unmarked evidence was included in some centre submissions, where work had been completed but marks had not been assigned.

Few centres submitted evidence for expressive and design section 3: evaluation. This is understandable because many candidates had not yet completed portfolio work at the time of review.

All centres photographed or scanned evidence for submission. In some centres, administrative errors, such as mistakes in addition, or paperwork being repeated or assigned to the wrong candidates' work, made the review process more challenging.

There was clear evidence of good practice by many centres in their moderation processes, which were thorough, detailed and highly effective.

Section 2: Comments on assessment judgements

Centres' assessment judgements for the question paper component were valid, consistent, and reliable in the majority of centres reviewed, in line with national standards.

In some centres, marking instructions had been applied leniently, where a candidate had given a descriptive answer and had not fully justified the point. This was apparent in both the mandatory and optional questions.

Centres' assessment judgements for expressive portfolio evidence was generally in line with national standards.

In some centres the detailed marking instructions were applied leniently, especially in the second part of section 1: process, and section 2: skills.

There were fewer design portfolios where marks had been allocated by the centre. Of the work assessed by centres, the evidence was generally in line with national standards.

In some centres the detailed marking instructions were applied leniently or inconsistently, especially in the second part of Section 1: process and in Section 2: skills.

Centres should take these points into account when making their own assessment judgements.

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

Candidates have been supported and encouraged to engage in a wide range of personal expressive themes and have engaged fully with the assessment tasks across the majority of centres.

Centres should be commended for the ambition shown in the range of design portfolio briefs which allowed candidates to explore both 2D & 3D outcomes.

Evidence included clear recording of marks, assessors' comments and other relevant supporting evidence that clearly showed the basis on which assessment judgements had been made.