



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

Subject	French
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

The majority of centres adopted an approach to assessment in accordance with SQA's guidance on gathering key evidence. Most centres submitted a range of evidence for learners at Higher, including reading, listening, directed writing and performance-talking.

Most centres made effective use of the SQA question paper for 2020–21. A few centres devised their own assessments using a range of SQA past papers, which had appropriate course coverage and level of demand.

Some centres used commercially produced papers, which contained appropriate course coverage, but in some instances presented an insufficient level of demand. Centres following the same approach should take account of this when making and reflecting on assessment judgements.

Where performance-talking evidence was submitted, the assessment approach was acceptable.

Section 2: Comments on assessment judgements

Overall, centres' assessment judgements were accurate and in line with national standards. Marking instructions were applied effectively in most instances. Centre evidence almost always included assessors' comments and other relevant supporting evidence, which clearly showed how assessment judgements had been made. Most centres employed detailed checklists and observation notes effectively.

There was clear evidence that centres' internal verification processes were thorough, detailed and highly effective. In some instances, there was evidence of supportive and robust internal verification procedures in the local authority. This has resulted in a high level of consistency.

Nevertheless, there were instances where marking instructions had been applied too leniently, too severely or inconsistently — particularly in the skills of reading and translation. This was apparent where centres used the SQA question paper for 2020–21, SQA past papers and commercially produced papers. Centres should reflect on this when reviewing and finalising their own assessment judgements.

Candidates were broadly successful in meeting the national standards of attainment for this course. Teachers and lecturers are clearly working hard to develop and to encourage the required skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.