



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

Subject	Health and Food Technology
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

Generally, each centre provided at least two different pieces of evidence for each candidate including a question paper, end of topic assessment and a completed or partially completed assignment. Many centres made effective use of the SQA 2021 NQ assessment resource(s).

In most instances, it was clear that centres had used the subject-specific guidance when selecting their key pieces of evidence.

Question paper

Most centres used the SQA 2021 question paper. A few centres devised their own assessments using a range of SQA past papers, which generally had appropriate course coverage and level of demand. The level of demand of some of the centre-devised assessments was found not to meet current national standards due to inaccurate use of command words such as 'describe' or 'identify' in the assessment. Centres devising their own assessments need to use the guidance available on the Understanding Standards website to ensure an appropriate level of demand.

Assignment

Some centres had used assignment briefs from a previous year, which was acceptable. Most centres used the SQA 2021 assignment briefs.

Most assessments were valid, although centres should ensure that candidates are assessed on only and all topics within the current mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding section of the course specification.

Section 2: Comments on assessment judgements

Assessment judgements were generally in line with national standards.

Question paper

Centres' assessment judgements in the question paper were accurate on the whole. When using the SQA 2021 NQ question paper assessment, the marking instructions were applied accurately and consistently by centres. However, there were instances where marking instructions were applied too leniently or too severely. This was apparent where marking instructions were created for a centre-devised assessment and were not in line with the national standards. Centres should be aware of this when devising their own assessment instruments.

Assignment

When marking the assignments, some centres were applying the marking instructions too leniently, especially for section 1a. It is important within this section that there is a clear understanding of the key issue in relation to the brief for marks to be awarded. Centres should be aware of this when making their own assessment judgements. In some cases, centres had made good use of the SQA assignment marking grid to record assessment judgements for each candidate. Centres are reminded that this tool is available and are encouraged to use this when assessing this component.

Centres are reminded that when making assessment judgements, it is good practice to make use of the materials available from Understanding Standards.

In the majority of cases, it was clear that internal moderation had taken place, confirming the reliability of assessment judgements.