



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

Subject	Spanish
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

All centres adopted an approach to assessment that closely followed SQA's guidance on gathering key evidence.

Most centres provided evidence of reading and translation, listening and directed writing with a minimum of one piece of evidence for each, demonstrating a range of attainment.

Some centres provided evidence of performance-talking, demonstrating a range of attainment.

Those centres which made use of the SQA 2021 NQ assessment resources did so effectively.

Most centres used a commercially produced paper, that contained appropriate course coverage and was in line with national standards.

It is important that centres are aware of the most up-to-date conditions of assessment when making use of past papers for assessment purposes. For instance, there is no longer an overall purpose question in the listening paper and centres should no longer include this as an assessable element. As well as this, centres should note that there is an overall purpose question in the reading paper, and they should include this as an assessable element.

Section 2: Comments on assessment judgements

Centres' assessment judgements were mostly valid, reliable and in line with national standards. They were clearly recorded against specific aspects of performance.

Most candidates were assessed accurately and consistently in accordance with national standards. However, there were instances where marking instructions had been applied too leniently in directed writing. Centres should be aware of this when making their own assessment judgements and may wish to consult Understanding Standards materials available at www.understandingstandards.org.uk.

In most centres, there was evidence that marking instructions had been amended following professional discussion. This is to be commended as an example of good practice. However, there was evidence of marking instructions being applied either too leniently or too severely in both reading and listening.

The approach to the marking of translation was inconsistent. This was particularly the case when commercially produced papers were used. Centres are encouraged to amend the marking instructions for translation to exemplify additional acceptable, satisfactory and not accepted responses. This would promote consistency in assessment judgements.

Evidence included assessors' comments and other relevant supporting evidence that clearly demonstrated the basis on which assessment judgements had been made.

There was evidence of internal quality assurance having taken place, specifically cross-marking and documented professional discussion. These processes were generally thorough, detailed and highly effective. This ensured that assessment judgements were valid and reliable. This is good practice and centres are to be commended.