



NQ Drama Qualification Verification Summary Report 2024–25

Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	Drama
Verification activity:	Event
Round:	1
Date published:	June 2025

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H231 73	National 3	Drama Skills
H232 73	National 3	Drama: Production Skills
H231 74	National 4	Drama Skills
H232 74	National 4	Drama: Production Skills
J28W 75	SCQF level 5	Drama: Production Skills
J28Y 76	SCQF level 6	Drama: Production Skills

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

For National 3, National 4 and SCQF level 5 Drama, centres continue to demonstrate a range of approaches to assessment, with some of these approaches designed appropriately to capture the skills required to meet the assessment standards. Overall, candidates are being offered a range of creative opportunities to respond, explore and develop drama skills and production skills.

National 3

In centres delivering the Drama Skills (National 3) unit, some approaches to assessment were designed and structured to provide the necessary support for candidates at this level. Approaches included step-by-step support relating to the required skill(s) for each assessment standard and differentiated resources to support candidates at this level. Centres had also developed digital approaches to assessment.

These approaches to assessment clearly supported candidates to demonstrate their developing skills with opportunities for assessor feedback clearly visible. Where this was not the case, centres had presented candidates with an approach to assessment that was not specifically designed for National 3 level. For example, presenting a National 3 candidate with an assessment approach for National 4 level. These approaches often lacked structure and signposting. This approach is challenging for candidates and included skills, knowledge and understanding not required for National 3 level.

There was not much evidence of candidates being offered the opportunity to explore production skills at National 3. However, from the evidence submitted for verification, the approaches to assessment clearly supported candidates to meet the requirements of the assessment standards at this level. Approaches to assessment were well laid out, role specific and differentiated with the necessary prompts and structure to enable candidates to meet the requirements of the unit.

National 4

For Drama Skills (National 4) unit, the evidence submitted shows approaches to assessment that included evidence relating to all the assessment standards for this unit. This range of evidence provided contrasting approaches to assessment including a diverse range of stimuli offered to support candidates' creative responses. However, some centres failed to offer appropriate stimuli for assessment standard 1.1, and did not capture candidates' application of practical skills effectively for assessment standards 1.3 and 2.2.

The approach from some centres did not allow candidates to access assessment standard 2.3. The requirement for this standard is for candidates to explore form, genre, structure and style. Many centres required candidates to simply state which form, genre, structure and style they would use with no practical exploration. Centres must make closer reference to the judging evidence table of the related unit assessment support pack to support candidates.

Tasks relating to assessment standards 2.4 and 1.4 were for the most part clear, however, some centres failed to adequately support candidates in 1.4 by solely focusing on the final production and not the process. For some centres there is evidence of approaches that do not fully support candidates in meeting an assessment standard in its entirety and not allowing opportunity within the approach for candidates to demonstrate their skills in enough depth. In contrast, there was evidence of over-assessing at National 4 level, with candidates being presented with multiple tasks for one assessment standard or candidates being presented with approaches to assessment for Drama Skills (SCQF level 5) unit.

For Production Skills (National 4), the approaches to assessment often lacked support and structure in the tasks offered to candidates, and did not signpost in enough detail the specifics of the chosen production roles. Therefore, candidate responses lacked appropriate terminology and insight into their production concept for this level. Some centres failed to design approaches to assessment to clearly capture the candidates 'using or applying' production skills'. For example, no recorded, photographic or specific

assessor comments were provided to evidence a candidate using or applying the production skill.

Some centres are over assessing at both National 3 and National 4 level and putting greater demand on candidates than is necessary.

For Drama: Production Skills (SCQF level 6), the approaches to assessment lacked the challenge and depth required at this level and there were inconsistencies across approaches. Candidate responses lacked the required detail and the assessment approach did not allow candidates to achieve at this level. It is important that centres refer closely to the judging evidence tables when creating their approach to assessment.

Assessment judgements

Unit verification requires the centre to make clear assessment judgements to accompany candidates' evidence, allowing the verifier to reach an informed decision that the centre is making reliable, consistent and valid assessment judgements which are in line with national standards.

For some centres, there was evidence of reliable, consistent and valid judgements being applied to candidate evidence; this was in cases where the approach to assessment was specifically designed to meet the requirements of an assessment standard, at the appropriate level. The assessor was therefore able to confidently and correctly judge the candidate evidence by referring to the judging evidence table in the SQA unit assessment support pack. Where an assessment judgement was identified as being lenient or severe, this was, in most cases, due to the approach to assessment not supporting candidates in meeting the requirements of an assessment standard at the appropriate level or inconsistency of the assessment judgement across all candidates in a cohort. It is important to note that all assessment judgements should be evidence based and these can be applied using a combination of candidate generated responses and assessor commentary. Where assessor judgements rely heavily or solely on

assessor commentary, these need to be specific to the assessment standard and skill being assessed, and in enough detail to capture the candidate's application of skills.

Some centres submitted complicated and complex systems relating to their assessment judgements, often grading candidates and applying marks to assessments. While this may support internal tracking and monitoring, it is not valid for unit verification. Centres are reminded that unit assessment is assessed as a pass or fail.

Section 3: general comments

Centres submitted evidence which demonstrated candidates meeting the requirements of some assessment standards.

In some cases, the evidence submitted was attributable to the assessment standard to which it related, but this was not always the case. **Centres must label candidate evidence appropriately by clearly indicating the related assessment standard.**

SQA offers the opportunity for centres to submit digital evidence for verification. If centres have opted to submit candidate evidence using this platform and scan original evidence, the evidence should be labelled with the assessment standard(s) to which it relates. Only evidence for the individual candidate should be uploaded under their name. It is not appropriate for centres to create a file for multiple candidates and upload this file multiple times.

If photographs are submitted as evidence, the candidate should be clearly visible and identifiable with some indication of the activity being explored.

Key messages

- Centres should indicate the unit assessment support pack that they used to assess the unit and include this detail on the candidate flyleaf.
- If a centre has included their own stimuli or made minor changes to the chosen unit assessment support pack, this does not constitute a 'centre devised' assessment.

- If centres wish to develop their own significantly different unit assessment, the assessment should be submitted to SQA's prior verification service to ensure it is valid.
- Centres must submit the corresponding approaches to assessment that match the candidate sample form, candidate responses and candidate assessment records. Submitting incorrect approaches to assessment will result in a not accepted verification outcome as it is not possible to verify the associated approaches or judgements made.

Internal Verification

There was some evidence of centres engaging with and applying internal quality assurance processes. A few centres used local authority-level documentation customised to suit their centre and faculty.

Most centres produced evidence of cross-marking and internally verifying approaches to assessment and judgements. However, there were ongoing inconsistencies in some centres' application of internal verification processes. This was evident where the approaches to assessment did not support candidates meeting the requirements of specific assessment standards at a specific level and this was not identified during internal verification. This resulted in the application of assessment judgements that are not reliable or valid.



NQ Drama Qualification Verification Summary Report 2024–25

Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	Drama
Verification activity:	Visit
Round:	2
Date published:	July 2025

National Course components verified

Course code	Course level	Course title
H223 74	National 4	Drama Performance: Added Value Unit

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Centres demonstrated a variety of assessment approaches. Many of these methodologies were effectively designed, enabling candidates to cultivate the skills necessary for each assessment standard.

Several centres have developed comprehensive booklets that help candidates in navigating the required assessment standards. Support for candidates was often provided through scaffolded activities, with notable examples of candidates accessing these resources digitally, thereby enhancing accessibility.

However, there are areas where further improvements to the centres' approaches are needed. It is recommended that centres focus on refining their labelling practices to enhance the alignment of tasks with the corresponding assessment standards, thereby improving the overall assessment experience for candidates. Using accurate labels is essential to ensure clarity and effectiveness in the assessment process.

There were instances where the approach to assessment did not take into account barriers to learning. Centres are reminded that digital recordings of discussions are an accepted form of presenting evidence. This approach can be particularly beneficial for candidates who may find written responses challenging.

In some cases, there were centres who used the National 5 performance criteria to evaluate the Added Value Unit. Candidates are unable to achieve the assessment standards if this is the case. Assessment standard 1.1 requires the exploration of two stimuli. Additionally, it is important that the exploration of a social issue is incorporated at this level.

National 5 acting mark sheets should not be used in the assessment of National 4 candidates, as National 4 is assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Assessment judgements

Report on assessment verification process

The visiting verification process requires centres to provide clear assessment judgements to support candidates' evidence. This enables the verifier to make an informed decision that the centre is making reliable, consistent and valid assessment judgements that are in line with national standards. For the majority of centres, there is substantial evidence of reliable, consistent, and valid judgements being applied to candidate evidence. This is particularly evident in instances where the assessment approach is tailored to meet the requirements of the assessment standard and is at the appropriate level. The centre assessors were able to evaluate candidate evidence confidently and accurately by referring to the judging evidence table found in the SQA unit assessment support pack.

In cases where an assessment judgement was identified as lenient or severe, discussions were held during the visit with centre staff, leading to a judgement in line with the national standard. It is important that all assessment judgements are based on evidence, which can be derived from a combination of candidate-generated responses and assessor commentary.

Some centres submitted complicated and complex systems relating to their assessment judgements, often grading candidates and assigning marks to assessments. Centres are reminded that unit assessments should be assessed as pass or fail.

Section 3: general comments

Centres are reminded that submitting videos and photos is encouraged as a way to provide evidence. Video evidence of discussions is a valid way to provide responses.

Centres actively engaged in discussions and the visits were seen as positive and supportive.

Key messages

- Candidate performances must be sustained for 10 minutes.
- It is essential that centres refer directly to the judging evidence table in SQA's unit assessment support pack for clarity in developing appropriate approaches to assessment.
- Centres must label candidate evidence appropriately by indicating the related assessment standard on it.

Internal verification

- There was clear evidence from most centres that they were engaging with, and applying, internal quality assurance processes.
- A few centres are adjusting local authority level documentation to use in their own subject-specific faculty or department.
- Most centres are producing evidence of cross-marking and internally verifying approaches to assessment and judgements.