



NQ verification 2022–23 round 2

Qualification verification summary report

Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	Geography
Verification activity:	Event
Date published:	June 2023

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H27G 74	National 4	Geography: Physical Environments
H27H 74	National 4	Geography: Human Environments
H27J 74	National 4	Geography: Global Issues
J2ED 75	SCQF level 5	Geography: Physical Environments
J2EH 75	SCQF level 5	Geography: Human Environments
J2EK 75	SCQF level 5	Geography: Global Issues
J2EF 76	SCQF level 6	Geography: Physical Environments
J2EJ 76	SCQF level 6	Geography: Human Environments
J2EL 76	SCQF level 6	Geography: Global Issues
J24C 77	SCQF level 7	Geographical Issues

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Centres used SQA unit assessment support packs and adapted unit assessment support packs. Some centres devised their own assessments to meet the needs of candidates.

Submissions from centres were all separate unit approaches and included interim and complete unit evidence. All the interim evidence submitted had sufficient assessment standards included to allow verification to proceed.

Assessments were mainly written test submissions. A small number of centres used an 'open book' approach to assessment. This is an acceptable approach for gathering evidence.

Since the beginning of session 2016–17, centres have been required to assess candidates against the revised outcomes and assessment standards. To help centres, the SQA unit assessment support packs, currently published on SQA’s secure site, were updated to take account of these revisions and to ensure that the packs are valid. Centres should assess candidate evidence as outlined in the judging evidence tables in these packs. All centres used the up-to-date packs in round 2.

Centres did not use any prior verified assessments for round 2. When using prior verified assessments in future, centres should ensure that they are using the current ones which are in line with the revised outcomes and assessment standards. Prior verified assessments are no longer valid after a unit has been revised. The prior verified assessments on SQA’s website are all current and valid. A number of prior verified assessments were removed from SQA’s secure site following the revisions in 2016. These are listed below the current assessments and should no longer be used by centres.

Advice for centres:

- ◆ when centres devise their own assessment tasks, they must include both the assessment task and the judging evidence table, which must include the ‘possible responses’
- ◆ prior verification is a free service provided by SQA and centres are encouraged to use this service for centre-devised assessments

Assessment judgements

Almost all assessment judgements were in line with national standards.

Centres are only required to submit evidence for one unit per candidate at each level. Only one unit is verified for each candidate at the external verification event. A small number of centres included evidence for two or three units.

Centres are reminded that each assessment standard needs to be assessed once only. While it is understood that asking two questions about an assessment standard can reduce the need for re-assessment, this strategy should be used proportionately so as not to make the process too burdensome for both candidates and assessors.

It is helpful if assessors indicate where the candidate has overtaken an assessment standard across the entirety of the candidate’s evidence and not just at the first applicable comment. Candidates may overtake assessments standards in more than one place in their evidence and this should be identified and credited wherever it occurs.

It was helpful, for verification, when ticks were placed at points on candidate work where an assessment standard was overtaken. This helps external verifiers to locate the evidence in candidates’ work. Nearly all centres used this approach.

Centres should be aware that responses for National 5 candidates should be more detailed than those for National 4 candidates. The assessment standards for National 5 often include the words ‘detailed’ descriptions or ‘detailed’ explanations.

When centres adapt a unit assessment support pack to cover a different level, they should make sure that the command words match the assessment standards for the new level. This applies particularly to 'describe' and 'explain'. They should also make sure that they are following the 'Making assessment judgements' column of the judging evidence table for the correct level.

The following good practice was identified during verification:

- ◆ many centres included detailed and helpful comments about assessment judgements, which helps the external verifiers to locate and review the evidence in candidates' work
- ◆ most centres indicated on candidates' work where assessment standards were overtaken, for example the use of 1.1, 1.2
- ◆ many centres included a summary grid to indicate which assessment standards had been overtaken by each candidate. The comments made by assessors were detailed and informative, which helped to make external verification more straightforward. These comments were often helpful for candidates also
- ◆ the candidate assessment record was effectively used by some centres
- ◆ re-assessment of assessment standards was clearly indicated on candidate work
- ◆ when re-assessing, most centres allowed the candidate to add to the information given in the first assessment by writing on the original script. This is a valid approach to re-assessment and simplifies the process
- ◆ where candidate evidence was generated by fieldwork, orally or via presentations, most assessors included notes to indicate what the candidate had done or said to overtake the assessment standard, which allows verifiers to confirm the assessor's judgements

Section 3: general comments

Almost all centres were 'accepted' in this round of verification. The high quality of the submissions made the verification process straightforward. Centres are to be commended on their time, effort and organisation of submissions.

Many centres had clear internal verification policies to show how quality assurance ensures national standards had been applied. These were effective as they provided the centre with a clear and systematic process. A small number of centres, however, did not include any evidence of internal verification of candidate evidence. Centres should always include evidence of internal verification processes along with candidate evidence. This may be in the documentation provided or in written comments on candidates' work. Quality assurance templates were devised by some centres to give a clear staged protocol for quality assurance.

The verification sample form was completed appropriately by most centres. If evidence is interim, centres should indicate if the candidate has an interim pass or interim fail. An interim pass is when candidates have passed all the assessment standards completed but still have other assessment standards to attempt.

Centres should ensure that the pass or fail result on the verification sample form matches the results written by assessors on the candidate evidence.

Centres should ensure they include a signed candidate evidence flyleaf for each candidate.

Reasons for the 'not accepted' outcomes were as follows:

In the National 5 Geography: Physical Environments unit:

- ◆ candidates did not identify patterns using two sources for assessment standard 1.1
- ◆ candidates did not include two processing techniques, one of which must relate to or use a map
- ◆ candidates did not have sufficiently detailed explanations for assessment standards 2.3 and 2.4