

NQ Geography Verification Summary 2025–26

Verification information

Subject	Geography
Verification activity	Event
Round	1
Date published	July 2026

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H27G 73	National 3	Geography: Physical Environments
H27H 73	National 3	Geography: Human Environments
H27J 73	National 3	Geography: Global Issues
H6N9 73	National 3	Geography: Physical Environments with a Scottish Context
H27G 74	National 4	Geography: Physical Environments
H27H 74	National 4	Geography: Human Environments
H27J 74	National 4	Geography: Global Issues
J21R 75	SCQF level 5	Geography: Physical Environments with a Scottish Context

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
J2EK 75	SCQF level 5	Geography: Global Issues
J2EL 76	SCQF level 6	Geography: Global Issues

Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Most centres used our unit assessment support packs, adapted unit assessment support packs and prior verified assessments. 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 interim evidence submitted included sufficient assessment standards to allow verification to proceed.

Centres should ensure that any prior verified assessments they are using are current. All prior verified assessments on our website are current and valid. We removed some prior verified assessments from our secure site in 2016. These are listed below the current assessments and must no longer be used. Centres used valid prior verified assessments or they successfully adapted an out-of-date one to include all the assessment standards in the unit.

It is not sufficient for a centre to state that an assessment has been prior verified by Qualifications Scotland. Centres should show evidence of this by including the certificate we sent or the prior verified number from our website. If a centre shares a prior verified assessment, they must also share the prior verification certificate.

Centres should note the following advice:

- Centres will be 'accepted' for approach if they use our unit assessment support packs or prior verified assessments.
- If centres devise their own assessments, they must use the command words in the assessment standards.
- Centres should check that any assessments they have had prior verified are dated after the revisions that we made in 2016.
- When centres devise their own assessment tasks, they must include both the assessment task and the judging evidence table for external verification; the judging evidence table must include 'possible responses' from candidates.
- We provide a free prior verification service and we encourage centres to use this service for centre-devised assessments.
- Further information about prior verification and resources are available on our [website](#).

Assessment judgements

Most 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.

Some centres over-assessed candidates this year. Each assessment standard needs to be assessed once only. While asking two questions about an assessment standard can reduce the need for re-assessment, centres should use this strategy proportionately so that the process is not a burden for candidates and assessors.

It is helpful if assessors indicate where the candidate has achieved an assessment standard across the entirety of the candidate's evidence and not just at the first applicable comment. Candidates may achieve assessment standards in more than

one place in their evidence and assessors should identify and credit this wherever it occurs. Most centres effectively carried out this approach.

Nearly all centres used the approach of placing ticks at points on candidates' work where they achieved an assessment standard, which helps external verifiers to locate the evidence.

If a centre changes the context of one of our unit assessment support packs (for example, Cholera to Malaria), they should ensure that the questions asked remain similar to those in the original pack.

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 and that 'possible responses' in the judging evidence table reflect the new level.

Verifiers identified the following good practice:

- Many centres included detailed and helpful comments about assessment judgements; this helps external verifiers locate and review the evidence in candidates' work.
- Most centres indicated where candidates achieved assessment standards on their scripts — for example, by adding 1.1 or 1.2.
- Most centres included a summary grid to indicate which assessment standards had been achieved by each candidate. Assessors' comments were detailed and informative, helping to make external verification more straightforward. They were also often helpful for candidates, especially if re-assessment was required.
- Most centres effectively used the candidate assessment record, which appeared to support assessors to reach valid judgements.
- Centres carried out re-assessment of assessment standards effectively and clearly indicated this on candidate scripts. Candidates were well prepared and their learning was reinforced before they were re-assessed.

- Where candidate evidence was generated orally, assessors included notes to indicate what the candidate had done or said to achieve the assessment standard. This is necessary to allow verification to proceed.
- Most centres demonstrated evidence of cross-marking or blind-marking.

General comments

Most submissions were 'accepted' in this round of verification. The high quality of some submissions made the verification process straightforward. We commend centres for the time, effort and organisation involved in their submissions.

Many centres had clear internal verification policies to show how quality assurance ensured national standards were applied. These were effective as they provided the centre with a clear and systematic process. A growing number of centres used departmental meetings to review and quality assure the centre's progress with a unit.

Centres must always include evidence of internal verification processes along with candidate evidence. This may be in the documentation provided or in written comments on candidate scripts. Some centres devised quality assurance templates to give a clear staged protocol for quality assurance. Centres that have just one geography teacher or lecturer should consider if teachers or lecturers in another department, school or college could assist in internally verifying their candidates' evidence.

Most centres completed the verification sample form appropriately. If evidence is interim, centres should indicate if the candidate has an interim pass or interim fail on this form. An interim pass is when candidates have passed all the assessment standards they have completed but still have other assessment standards to attempt. An interim fail is when candidates have failed one or more assessment standards 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.

We remind centres that candidates must attempt all assessment standards but not all assessment standards need to be re-assessed for candidates to pass a unit. Refer to

the unit specification for specific details for each unit on the Geography subject page on our website.

For centre-devised assessments it is essential that the complete assessment (including additional resources like Ordnance Survey maps) and the judging evidence table are submitted with candidate evidence. We will return these to the centre after completing verification.

Some assessments are being shared by centres that we have not prior verified. Some of these state that they have been prior verified by, for example, local authority groups, but they do not meet the standard required to be 'accepted' for approach. Assessors must check that any assessments they have obtained from sources other than our website are valid.

For all centres whose approach to assessment was 'accepted', their judgements on candidate evidence were also 'accepted'.

Reasons for 'not accepted' outcomes

Approaches

National 4 Geography: Physical Environments unit:

- the assessment did not include a question that allowed conflicts to be briefly explained for assessment standard 2.4

National 4 Geography: Global Issues unit:

- the assessments did not include questions that covered assessment standard 1.1. The question only had one source instead of two
- assessment standard 1.2 — there was no question asking for a conclusion from the evidence
- assessment standard 2.1 — there was no question asking for the description of key features

National 3 Geography: Physical Environments unit:

- the assessment did not include a question that covered assessment standard 2.2 (briefly describing the formation of one landscape feature)

Judgements

All 'not accepted' outcomes were centre-devised assessments that we had not prior verified. We strongly advise centres to have centre-devised assessments prior verified.

NQ Geography Verification Summary 2025–26

Verification information

Subject	Geography
Verification activity	Event
Round	2
Date published	July 2026

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H27K 74	National 4	Geography Assignment

Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Most centres used our added value unit assessment support pack, with a small number of centres adapting this for local context or to use information collected on field trips.

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

Centres used a variety of methods to enable candidates to respond to the assessment standards:

- written reports
- PowerPoint presentations
- posters
- written responses based on the production of Processed Information sheets
- class projects with the assessment standards integrated into wider learning

Some centres allowed candidates to choose their own topic or issue.

A small number of centres re-wrote the 'possible answers' in the judging evidence table to reflect the geographical area chosen or the themes chosen by candidates.

Assessment judgements

Most assessment judgements were in line with national standards. Verifiers identified the following good practice:

- Many centres included detailed and helpful comments about assessment judgements; this helps external verifiers locate and review the evidence in candidates' work.
- Most centres indicated on candidate scripts where candidates had achieved assessment standards — for example, by adding 1.1 and 1.2.
- Markers and internal verifiers used different coloured pens, allowing external verifiers to easily identify where centres had completed moderation.
- Most centres included a summary grid to indicate which assessment standards each candidate had achieved. Assessors' comments were detailed and informative, which helped make external verification more straightforward, and were often helpful for candidates, especially if re-assessment was required.
- Most centres used the candidate assessment record effectively, which appeared to support assessors to reach valid judgements.
- Centres carried out re-assessment of assessment standards effectively and clearly indicated this on candidate scripts. Candidates were well prepared and their learning was reinforced before they were re-assessed.

- Where candidate evidence was generated orally, assessors included notes to indicate what the candidate had done or said to achieve the assessment standard. This is necessary to allow verification to proceed.
- Most centres provided evidence of cross-marking or blind-marking.
- Most centres included their internal verification policies.

All centres were 'accepted' or 'accepted*' in this round of verification.

Reasons for 'accepted*':

- A small number of centres incorrectly recorded candidate results on the verification sample form, for example, by recording candidates as fail when they had passed all the assessment standards.

General comments

Most centres were 'accepted' in this round of verification. The high quality of these submissions made the verification process straightforward. We commend these centres on the time, effort, and organisation involved in their submissions.

Many centres had clear internal verification policies to show how quality assurance ensured national standards were applied. These were effective as they provided the centre with a clear and systematic process. A number of centres used departmental meetings to review and quality assure the centre's progress with a unit.

Centres must always include evidence of internal verification processes along with candidate evidence. This may be in the documentation provided or in written comments on candidate scripts. Some centres devised quality assurance templates to give a clear staged protocol for quality assurance.

Most centres completed the verification sample form appropriately. If evidence is interim, centres should indicate if the candidate has an interim pass or interim fail on this form. An interim pass is when candidates have passed all the assessment standards they have completed but still have other assessment standards to attempt. An interim fail is when candidates have failed one or more assessment standards 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.

Some centres used a National 5-style assignment assessment as evidence of their National 4 added value unit. Centres should ensure that candidate work is marked using the National 4 assessment standards found in the judging evidence table in the National 4 Geography Assignment (H27K 74) on our secure website.