NQ verification 2022–23 round 2

Qualification verification summary report

Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	**Philosophy**
Verification activity:	**Postal**
Date published:	**June 2023**

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
J25F 75	SCQF level 5	Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt
H24K 75	SCQF level 5	Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt
J25T 75	SCQF level 5	Philosophy: Moral Philosophy
J25N 76	SCQF level 6	Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt
J25V 76	SCQF level 6	Philosophy: Moral Philosophy

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

In general, centres' approaches to assessment were valid and in line with SQA requirements. Centres provided useful and effective feedback to individual candidates as evidenced in the candidate assessment records. In general, information on assessment judgements was clearly laid out and detailed where decisions were discussed. This greatly assisted the verification process.

Some centres created an assessment booklet, which included the questions and adequate space for candidates to provide evidence that they had met the minimum standard. The format used was helpful to candidates. The space created to provide feedback to candidates was also useful and an example of good practice.

Generally, centres indicated assessment decisions and cross-marking for internal verification clearly. However, at times this was more challenging to follow. Best practice was present in those centres with strong internal verification procedures in place. These included a plan of when internal verification would take place over the year, records of discussions between

assessor and internal verifier and individual record sheets for each candidate to accompany the evidence, and detailed indication of decisions.

When recording internal verification procedures it is important to ensure that centres use the most up-to-date terminology when discussing assessment — for example, using the term unit assessment rather than NAB; and SCQF level 5 rather than National 5 or Intermediate. Awareness of the latest versions of assessments and correct terminology is essential, and centres should confirm through internal verification that they are up-to-date with these.

Additionally, it is not necessary to use marks in unit assessment questions. The requirement is that the candidate has achieved at least the minimum pass for each outcome.

Some centres had used H24K 75 Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt, which was on SQA's secure site in error. Assessment decisions were accepted for these, however in future centres should check they are using the latest version of this unit on SQA's secure site — J25F 75 Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt.

Assessment judgements

Centres' assessment judgements were in line with national standards, reliable and accepted for the vast majority of candidates. Assessors made effective use of the marking information to support the marks awarded to each candidate and in general, assessor and internal verifier comments were clear and simple to follow as to how the assessment decision had been made. It was particularly encouraging to see candidates' good work and effort praised in feedback, which is excellent practice.

At SCQF level 6 for Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt, a more evaluative approach was necessary in some candidates' responses. When asked to provide a reasoned argument on a theory of knowledge, a more balanced conclusion on how convincing this is would show strengths as well as weaknesses and candidates did not always provide this, despite reasoning well.

Slight leniency in marks was noted at times, and centres should ensure that the candidates are as precise as possible in their explanations of theories and concepts.

Additionally, where candidates have expanded on their answers verbally with the assessor, this should be clearly transcribed on the evidence, rather than giving a generalised phrase. It is necessary to have this evidence in order to make assessment judgements and for the internal verifier to confirm these.

Section 3: general comments

Specific and detailed feedback would be helpful for each candidate to show where they need to develop their knowledge and understanding. Within this feedback, assessors could point the candidate towards further sources of information on that particular topic or to revisit class activities to reinforce the learning. It is understood that this may be happening in conversations with candidates, however, and not recorded on paperwork.

Some candidates are using the example of Nazis in World War II as a misguided perception of duty. This is technically a misinterpretation of Kant's concept of duty on the part of the

Nazis, which would not pass Kant's categorial imperatives. Therefore, it is not an effective criticism of Kant, as in this case, the maxim is 'Always kill Jews', which would not pass the categorical imperative test. Kant would therefore not class this as a duty to be upheld morally. This issue is one where people have not followed Kant's rules and is a criticism of their interpretation of the concept of duty, rather than Kant's ethics. Although this is a criticism of Kantian Ethics commonly in circulation in many notes, it would be helpful if other, more effective, weaknesses could be emphasised for candidates to use.