NQ verification 2022–23 round 2

Qualification verification summary report

Section 1: verification group information

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

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
J20E 76	SCQF level 6	Politics: Political Theory
J20F 76	SCQF level 6	Politics: Political Systems

Section 2: comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

It is recommended that centres use the unit assessment support packs provided by SQA and accessed through SQA's secure site. These packs cover the requirements of each unit and provide information on how to gather evidence and make assessment judgements. These packs have been designed to assess candidates on a pass or fail basis and, rather than using cut-off scores, describe how assessment evidence is to be judged against each assessment standard. They set out possible assessment approaches, which are in line with the standards that must be met and are designed to be as open and flexible as possible. They can be used to assess candidates, be adapted for centres' own assessment programmes or help in the development of centres' own assessments.

Centres are reminded that evidence is required to show that the candidate has met the assessment standards and overall outcomes for each unit. Evidence can take different forms and may be a combination of practical, written, oral or recorded evidence, as appropriate to the assessment activity and the needs of the individual candidate.

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge, experience and understanding of candidates, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and which conditions and contexts to use.

Centres are reminded that if they produce their own assessment task or revise the SQA unit assessment support pack, they must ensure it allows candidates to meet all the assessment standards. Some centres submitted internal assessments or prelim exam scripts as evidence of candidates passing unit assessments. In such cases, centres must clearly indicate where each candidate response covers the minimum standard to satisfy each assessment standard and overall outcome.

Assessment judgements

Since the basis of unit judgements is pass or fail, the allocation of marks is not required and may be unhelpful to the candidate, especially when marks are not closely aligned to assessment standards. This is particularly relevant where centres use interim assessments, prelim exams or class tests.

Where centres continue to use marks and indicate a pass mark, they must ensure that the pass mark allocated covers the minimum standard to pass an assessment standard and indicate clearly how the marks allocated translate into attainment of the assessment standard.

The judging evidence tables in the SQA unit assessment support packs describe how the assessment standards and overall outcomes can be met. Assessment judgements must be made against each assessment standard. Judging evidence may involve assessing the degree of accuracy, relevance or the number of correct responses in the evidence and, if desired, marks can be used to assist in this process.

Centres are reminded that if a candidate successfully meets the requirements of the specified number of assessment standards they will be judged to have passed the unit overall and no further re-assessment will be required.

The specific requirement for each unit is as follows:

Politics: Political Theory
♦ all assessment standards must be achieved for outcome 1
♦ 1 out of 2 assessment standards must be achieved for outcome 2

Politics: Political Systems
♦ all assessment standards must be achieved for outcome 1
♦ 1 out of 2 assessment standards must be achieved for outcome 2

Politics: Political Parties and Elections
♦ both assessment standards must be achieved for outcome 1
♦ 2 out of 3 assessment standards must be achieved for outcome 2

There is still a requirement for candidates to be given the opportunity to meet all assessment standards. The thresholds have been put in place to reduce the volume of re-assessment where that is required.

Section 3: general comments

Internal verification

Centres are advised that for external verification it is good practice to include a note of explanation regarding the internal quality assurance policies and procedures used. While most internal verification activity will be integrated within existing processes, it is important that key activities are documented. This will support centres in managing internal assessment and verification, and planning for improvement, and will also allow centres to demonstrate to SQA that an effective internal verification system is in place. Further information about internal verification is available in SQA's NQ internal verification toolkit, which provides templates that can be used to support an effective internal verification process.

External verification

External verification is the process SQA uses to assure the quality of internal assessment including internal verification in centres. Before submitting evidence for external verification centres should ensure that they have referred to the guidance documents. Guidance on evidence required for external verification of units is provided on the quality assurance section of SQA's website.

Prior verification

It is recommended that centres make use of SQA's prior verification service for centre-devised assessments. Any assessments submitted for prior verification should have been internally quality assured by centre staff beforehand. It is strongly recommended that centres submit significantly changed assessments for prior verification before they use them for assessment purposes. Further information on the prior verification service is available on the delivery processes section of SQA's website.