



NQ Psychology Qualification Verification Summary Report 2024–25

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Psychology
Verification activity:	Event
Round:	1
Date published:	April 2025

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
J2CY 75	SCQF level 5	Psychology: Research
J2D1 75	SCQF level 5	Psychology: Individual Behaviour
J2D3 75	SCQF level 5	Psychology: Social Behaviour
J2D0 76	SCQF level 6	Psychology: Research
J2D2 76	SCQF level 6	Psychology: Individual Behaviour
J2D4 76	SCQF level 6	Psychology: Social Behaviour

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

All centres used the unit assessment support (UAS) packs provided by SQA, with most using package 1: unit-by-unit approach to assessment. As the unit assessment support packs have been through a rigorous quality assurance process, they are considered valid approaches to assessment.

Centres adapted the unit assessment support packs in different ways, for example:

- using different tasks for the assessment standards
- by framing the assessment standards around a specific question
- by utilising scenarios for specific assessment standards

A few centres used a mark allocation in their approach to assessment. While this approach may be helpful in preparing candidates for external assessment, this is not helpful in assessing whether candidates have achieved the assessment standards required for unit assessment. Candidates are only required to achieve the assessment standards for unit assessment. Centres are therefore discouraged from focusing on marks, which can often lead them to make an incorrect assessment judgement.

Centres should ensure that they are using the most current version of SQA-provided unit assessment support packs, available from SQA's secure site.

For centre-devised assessments or unit assessment support packs that have been adapted in significant ways, it is strongly recommended that centres use the free prior verification service provided by SQA to ensure validity. More information is available on [SQA's website](#).

Assessment judgements

Some centres used the information on judging evidence effectively to support assessment judgements for each candidate. In these instances, assessment

judgements were clearly based on the assessment standards and candidates had been appropriately identified as 'pass' or 'fail' against these. From the evidence submitted, it was clear that some assessors showed a clear understanding of the assessment standards, and accurately and consistently applied these standards.

It was noted that some candidates could have met the requirements of the assessment standards if assessors had referred to both the judging evidence table (JET) and the unit specification when making assessment judgements. A few centres over-assessed, as they had not taken into account the thresholds put in place in the unit specifications in 2019. It is important that centres are aware of minimum standards for achievement and assessment standard thresholds, which can be found in the unit specifications.

Some assessors provided useful notes on the candidate assessment record to explain how they reached assessment judgements, and some centres annotated candidate scripts to indicate where assessment standards had been achieved. Centres should mark on the candidate scripts where an assessment standard is achieved, as this aids both internal and external verification.

Centres should pay particular attention to J2D3 75: Psychology: Social Behaviour, assessment standard 1.3: 'Using psychological knowledge to explain examples of everyday behaviour', as some candidates had explained examples of everyday behaviour using concepts, but not research. To achieve this assessment standard, candidates are required to 'use concepts and research to explain at least one example of everyday behaviour'. This information can be found in the unit assessment support pack for the unit: J2D3 75: Psychology: Social Behaviour, in the second column of the judging evidence table.

Some candidates included strengths and weaknesses related to a study for unit J2D1 75: Psychology: Individual Behaviour, assessment standard 1.3: 'Explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the psychological approaches and theories used to explain the behaviour'. Centres should encourage their candidates to provide strengths and weaknesses specifically for approaches and theories, rather than studies, to align more accurately with the requirements of this assessment standard.

Section 3: General comments

Internal verification

Many centres engaged in thorough internal verification procedures that were supportive and developmental. It was encouraging to see professional dialogue and collaborative processes, and these practices supported the external verification process. Annotations in different colours by assessors and internal verifiers gave clear indications of assessment judgements made by both.

As well as ensuring national standards are maintained, internal verification should ensure that assessors are fully supported through the process of unit assessment. Internal verifiers and assessors may find the suggested approach in SQA's [NQ internal verification toolkit](#) useful to ensure that national standards are maintained, assessors are supported, and valid assessment approaches are used.

Good practice

Centres are to be commended on candidate feedback. Some assessors provided extremely detailed feedback in relation to achievement. Some centres identified where assessment standards had been met on candidate scripts and utilised the candidate assessment record effectively, enabling candidates to monitor their own progress. This practice was helpful during the verification event.

Many centres provided candidates with a choice of assessment approaches, enabling candidates to have some autonomy and ownership over the way evidence is presented. Centres submitted a range of evidence formats at the verification event, including posters, responses to prompts, booklets, worksheets and essays, showing variety in the way centres adapted the unit assessment support packs to support achievement for the specific requirements of their candidates.