



National Qualifications

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2022–23

Religion, Belief and Values Award

Verification group number: 119

National Qualifications Awards

H190 43 Investigating Religion and Belief

H196 43 Religion, Belief and Values: Values in Action

H190 44 Investigating Religion and Belief

H196 44 Religion, Belief and Values: Values in Action

H190 45 Investigating Religion and Belief

H196 45 Religion, Belief and Values: Values in Action

H190 46 Investigating Religion and Belief

H196 46 Religion, Belief and Values: Values in Action

General comments

This was the third year of verifying these units. There continues to be an increase in uptake across the country with centres using the units as part of core provision (S2–S3) in the broad general curriculum (BGE) while other centres are using them with senior classes (S4–S6) as part of candidates' entitlement of RME in Scotland. In many cases, whole-year groups were put forward for the NQ Award at a variety of levels. Overall, the work presented met the assessment standards and centres had used a variety of approaches to assessment.

Some centres are combining the work that candidates complete for the Values in Action unit with that of the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative, which is acceptable practice.

Course arrangements, unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Most of the centres visited had devised their own instruments of assessment in line with the [Award and unit specifications](#).

These were mainly of a good standard and enabled candidates some degree of personalisation and choice of issues and topics in line with the principles of [Building the Curriculum 3](#).

Some centres had produced booklets that guided candidates through the units, and this was particularly effective in supporting candidates at SCQF levels 3 and 4.

Other centres visited had used an instrument of assessment that was in an A3 format with boxes. Each box had a prompt which had the potential to enable candidates to attain the required standard. For example: 'Analyse relevant sources to provide an explanation of a religious belief/viewpoint about the topic' and 'Explain how studying the topic has had an effect on your own beliefs'. Candidates were also provided with supplementary sheets if they had not achieved the assessment standards.

All centres visited this year viewed their visits as a beneficial and positive process and were happy to share their material for exemplification. Discussion around approaches and exemplification material brought by the external verifiers was helpful and encouraging.

Evidence requirements

Evidence from 12 candidates of the centre's choice is required at any level for verification purposes. If the cohort is less than 12 all the candidates' evidence is required.

Centres do not need to produce evidence for every candidate presented for the Award. The evidence selected should show where the chosen candidates have achieved the learning outcomes. This means that candidates' work should clearly show where the assessment standards have been achieved.

Detailed checklists and assessment records were made available for all units being verified as set out in the visit plans sent to the centre. Marking schemes and assessment records were valid and reliable.

Most centres supplied their internal verification policy and complete verification documentation including the sample plan and verification feedback to candidates. Often the candidates' folios of work and centre assessment judgements were supplied for verification purposes.

It was helpful to the verifiers to see minutes of meetings and discussions over particular outcomes and assessment standards to ensure that these were in line with the national standards.

Administration of assessments

All the centres visited provided paperwork to support their assessment processes. There was clear evidence of cross-marking within centres and across centres.

Centres are reminded that assessments are open-book and that the amount of support that a candidate receives can determine the level they are presented at. Centres should refer to the unit specifications for each level as these specify the minimum outcomes and assessment standards required to achieve the award.

See the [SQA secure site for further guidance](#).

Learning and teaching

The centres visited employed a range of opportunities for candidates to investigate and understand topics involving religion or religious belief. All centres provided opportunities for candidates to put their faith or values into action through practical

engagement in communities thereby developing a range of skills including reflection, application and working with others.

A wide range of topics chosen for study were in evidence which demonstrated the breadth of interest ranging from euthanasia and assisted suicide, animal rights, war and conflict, to many other topics involving religion or religious belief.

There was evidence of a number of transferable skills that candidates had used in the research and presentation of their investigation of how religion and values can shape and contribute to the lives of individuals and communities.

Overall assessment

All centres visited had supplied assessments based on the national standards as set out in SQA assessment support packs (ASPs) for the award and unit specifications. These assessments gave candidates a range of tasks which allowed for individual choice in presenting their research for assessment purposes. All centres had made positive use of the unit ASPs as the basis for their own assessments and had produced assessment materials of a high standard for candidates.

The evidence seen included posters, mindmaps, PowerPoint and ICT based evidence and extended responses to broad, open-ended question prompts. In some instances, naturally occurring evidence was used and recorded as evidence for the units or parts of the units.

Overall, the assessment judgements were based on the requirements for the units and marking guidance in the ASPs. There was a consistent approach by all assessors and detailed records and checklists of assessment judgements were available during verification. Marking schemes used were valid, reliable and were applied consistently.

During the visits, it was suggested by the verifiers, that the marking schemes needed to reflect the flexibility and choice of candidates about the topics they were assessed on. This would mean that marking schemes should be holistically applied using SQA assessment support packs for the award and unit specifications.

Centres are reminded that assessments are open-book and that the amount of support that a candidate receives can determine the level they are presented at. Centres should refer to the unit specifications for each level as these specify the minimum outcomes and assessment standards required to achieve the award.

Refer to <https://secure.sqa.org.uk/> for further guidance.

Verification

The verification process was supported by detailed records of feedback to candidates and discussions of centres' internal verification processes.

The verification process focuses on ensuring the validity of assessment instruments, verifying the reliability of assessment decisions, verifying assessment instruments are used correctly, verifying assessment instruments are used in line with assessment specifications, and ensuring the appropriate resources are in place to support the delivery of the qualification.

All centres supplied evidence of their internal verification procedures and documented professional dialogue between the assessor and internal verifier demonstrating how assessment judgements had been made promoting consistency of standards.

Centres seeking guidance on internal verification should refer to SQA's [NQ Internal Verification Toolkit](#).

Areas of good practice reported in 2022–23

- The centres visited clearly demonstrated that they had fully applied and implemented the CfE principles in their approach to assessment. There was opportunity for personalisation and choice and some of the evidence submitted had been produced during the learning and teaching process.
- The instruments of assessment had been created to enable candidates to meet the outcomes of the units and it was shown that this approach had supported all candidates across the levels presented for verification.
- In addition, during the verification visits, it was clear that motivated and enthusiastic individuals and teams have fully engaged with NQ Award programmes and the opportunities they create for candidates. The wide variety of topics chosen by candidates as topics for the Investigating Religion and Belief unit shows it is delivered in a way that encourages personalisation and choice for the candidates. Annotations were made by both the assessor and internal verifier on the record sheet provided, giving a clear overview of the final assessment judgements.

Specific areas for improvement reported in 2022–23

- It was noted that where verbal feedback was given to candidates a formal record of this should be kept for future reference as this will augment the written responses where further detail was required during any verification activity.
- Centres must also ensure that all outcomes are shown on all the candidates' work to enable the verification process to be undertaken without ambiguity.
- Centres should take care not to over-assess candidates. For example, a level 4 candidate should not have to write a detailed account. Centres should be aware that the flexibility of these awards allows for presentation at a variety of levels within one class.

- This award needs time if the unit is to be successfully completed. Units within this award carry the same credit weighting as NQ units, so candidates should have a suitable and reasonable amount of time to engage fully with the aims of the unit, developing their knowledge and understanding and reflecting on the work that they have done.