

NQ English Verification Summary 2025–26

Verification information

Subject	English
Verification activity	Event
Round	1
Date published	July 2026

National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H2WT 73	National 3	English: Understanding Language
H2WV 73	National 3	English: Producing Language
H23W 73	National 3	Literacy
H23H 74	National 4	English: Analysis and Evaluation
H23T 74	National 4	English: Creation and Production
H23W 74	National 4	Literacy
J2A9 75	SCQF level 5	English: Analysis and Evaluation
J2AC 75	SCQF level 5	English: Creation and Production

Comments on assessment

Interim evidence

We remind centres that incomplete unit submissions should be viewed as interim evidence. When completing the Verification Sample Form, centres must enter a pass or fail on the basis of each candidate's current submitted evidence, rather than being entered as a fail because a candidate has not yet completed an outcome.

For example, for the analysis and evaluation unit, some candidates in the sample may have both reading and listening while others only have reading. In either case, the candidate evidence should be judged as pass or fail on the basis of their individual evidence per submission. If all outcomes for a unit are included this would be complete evidence; if not all outcomes for a unit are included this would be interim evidence.

Assessment approaches

Most centres continue to use our current unit assessment support (UAS) packs to assess reading and listening. Centres must ensure that they access current versions of UAS packs from our secure site rather than relying on archived material.

There were a small number of centres using pre-2017 versions of UAS packs. A number of assessment standards were removed in 2017, including the requirement to comment on audience and purpose.

This session, revisions have been made to the following UAS packs:

- National 3 Literacy package 1 unit-by-unit approach
- National 4 Literacy package 2 unit-by-unit approach
- National 4 English Assignment added value unit assessment

There were some very effective centre-devised assessments allowing candidates personalisation and choice of both topic and genre for writing.

We offer a free [prior verification service](#) to centres who devise their own assessments. This gives the centre confidence that their assessment is fit for purpose and meets national standards.

Assessment judgements

Most centres' judgements were valid, reliable and in line with national standards.

Reading and listening

There were some instances where candidates were incorrectly judged to have met assessment standards 1.2 and 2.2, even though they had not successfully selected and commented on at least two features of language.

Talking

Where talking was submitted, evidence of candidate responses was often too broad in nature.

We remind centres that detailed commentaries should include examples of words and phrases that the candidate used in their presentation or discussion so that the evidence base for assessment judgements is clear.

Internal verification

Most centres submitted evidence with clear annotation of candidate scripts by individual assessors, which supported the process of confirming assessment judgements.

Many centres evidenced how their internal verification was carried out on candidate scripts and/or additional documentation. Centres also clearly indicated on candidate scripts where assessment standards were evidenced and/or provided detailed assessment commentaries as part of their internal verification processes. As a result, most centres' assessment judgements were able to be easily verified.

A record of professional dialogue between assessors and verifiers greatly helps the verification process. However, not all centres provided an overview of their internal verification procedures, and it was not possible to comment on their effectiveness.

Centres should review their internal verification processes to ensure that they are effective. It is good practice to refer to our [Internal Verification Toolkit](#).

General comments

Revised guidance was issued to centres selected for verification this year and this reduced the number of centres submitting more than one unit. Round 1 evidence should only be evidence from one unit. It is not necessary to send both English and Literacy.

Where centres submitted combined English and Literacy evidence, this was verified and reported on as Literacy.

Centres must ensure that they are using the most up-to-date assessment materials and UAS packs. These can be downloaded from our secure website through your qualifications co-ordinator. When devising their own assessments, centres must ensure that all assessment standards can be fully met by candidates.

We encourage centres to make use of our free [prior verification service](#) – available for all units apart from H23Y 74 English Assignment: added value.

NQ English Verification Summary 2025–26

Verification information

Subject	English
Verification activity	Event
Round	2
Date published	July 2026

National Course components and National Units verified

Course code	Course level	Component title
HK57 75	National 5	English: Performance–spoken language
J00T 76	Higher	English: Performance–spoken language

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H23Y 74	National 4	English assignment

Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

National 5 and Higher English: performance—spoken language

Most centres presented candidates with personalisation and choice. Candidates covered a range of topics from personal interest to presentations based on Scottish texts and literature texts.

Some centres generated evidence using innovative ideas, for example candidates ‘teaching the class’ course content and giving presentations on tackling aspects of the Reading for Understanding and Evaluation and Scottish text section of the course.

National 4 English assignment: added value

There are two parts to the assignment.

Part 1 is a critical essay or spoken presentation in response to prose fiction, drama, poetry, non-fiction, web pages, film or TV.

Part 2 is a discussion-based activity on a topic related to the selected text(s), to which candidates contribute relevant ideas, opinions and/or information using straightforward language.

Most centres used our revised English assignment UAS pack to support candidates in the production of critical essays on a range of appropriate literary texts, non-fiction texts and film or TV texts.

Most assignment submissions were in the form of a written critical essay; a small number of submissions presented the findings in the form of an oral presentation.

In some centres, the level of support offered to candidates went beyond reasonable assistance. The term ‘reasonable assistance’ is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be ‘reasonable assistance’, they may not be ready for

assessment, or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates know the requirements of the assessment at the start. They can clarify with candidates how to approach the assessment and to guide them in producing their response. Teachers and lecturers may prompt candidates where appropriate to clarify the requirements of the assessment but should not direct them to any specific response. For example, they should not provide specific advice on how to improve responses or provide model answers.

Teachers and lecturers would usually give reasonable assistance on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates, for example advice on how to structure a critical essay, or how to take notes on an aspect of a text.

Examples of broad advice on structure include commonly used mnemonics such as TARTS, PEAL or PEAR or choice of headings, areas of focus, or choice of techniques.

It is not acceptable to provide candidates with specific topic sentences, example paragraphs or cloze passages to complete.

In assessment standard 1.3, we remind centres that the oral presentation should last approximately 5 minutes and the critical essay should be 600 to 800 words.

We remind centres to add the word count to the end of any written added value assignment submissions, as this helps with assessment judgements and the verification process.

While some candidates may produce their essay in preparation for National 5 and have their level of presentation changed, we remind centres that there is no time restriction on the completion of the presentation of findings. Teachers and lecturers can give candidates the opportunity to revisit and/or extend their initial response in order to meet the minimum word count, or any other aspect of the assessment standards that was not fully evidenced in the initial response.

Feedback in these circumstances should be broad in nature and should not include specific guidance on how to improve responses.

If candidates present their findings as an oral presentation for assessment standard 1.3, then assessment standard 1.4 should form a separate discussion-based activity (or a series of questions) on a topic related to the selected text(s). It can take place at any point in the assessment process.

It helps the verification process if centres make clear the topic of the discussion-based activity.

Assessment judgements

National 5 and Higher English: performance–spoken language

Most centres' judgements were valid, reliable and in line with national standards.

Many centres submitted a performance–spoken language assessment checklist, providing detailed comments on the contributions made by candidates, with a range of quotations and examples of key vocabulary.

To help with the verification process, we remind centres to include details of the assessment task they used to generate candidate performance.

Some centres did not include examples of the 'choice and use of language' for all candidates to fully exemplify the basis on which judgements were made. Examples of detailed checklists are available on the Understanding Standards section of our secure website.

National 4 English assignment: added value

Most centres' judgements were valid, reliable and in line with national standards.

There were some examples of centres recording passes for critical essays that did not reach the minimum word count of 600 words.

For assessment standard 1.4, there were some instances where the checklists submitted did not provide enough detail for verifiers to confirm the assessment judgements made. We remind centres that detailed commentaries should include

examples of words and phrases the candidate uses within their presentation or discussion. The level of detail in submissions must include examples of candidates' 'choice and use of language' and 'responding to detailed spoken language'.

Exemplification of candidate evidence, with accompanying commentary, can be found on our [Understanding Standards web page](#).