



**National Qualifications 2015
Internal Assessment Report
Expressive Arts Bacculaureate**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified:

Expressive Arts Baccalaureate: Interdisciplinary Project

General comments

This is the third year of delivery of the Interdisciplinary Project Unit in Expressive Arts. Nine candidates from six centres undertook the Interdisciplinary Project, with five of these centres also presenting candidates in at least one of the other Interdisciplinary Project curricular areas.

All presenting centres were subject to external verification. The assessment decisions from two centres were judged to be in line with national standards. For the other four centres, the assessment decisions relating to one candidate from each centre were deemed to have been severe, and a higher grade was recommended.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Two centres have previously presented in Expressive Arts, and three have previously presented in other subject areas. These centres already have a well-developed mechanism for assessing and internally verifying Interdisciplinary Projects, and have a sound knowledge and experience of national standards for the Interdisciplinary Project Unit. There is evidence from many centres of collegial working which allows staff and candidates to support each other across the subject areas and enhances the interdisciplinary nature of the Unit.

Centre representatives at the Quality Forum event advised that centre staff and candidates had made good use of the exemplar material available on the SQA website, and commented on the usefulness of this material for both themselves and their candidates. The centre representatives especially found the range of exemplars, from A to C, extremely helpful in assisting the grading process.

Those attending made valuable contributions to discussions and welcomed the opportunity to interact with the External Verifiers and assessors from other centres to further develop their knowledge. It was evident at the Quality Forum events that centre representatives have a sound knowledge of the specifications for the Unit and most are comfortable with the grading criteria.

Evidence Requirements

There is a good understanding of the Evidence Requirements for the Unit in most centres. All centres used SQA templates, and all mandatory pieces of evidence, including additional timeline sheets and a completed Assessor Report, were

submitted for each candidate. For the majority of candidates the assessor comments were full and detailed. External Verifiers gave feedback commending centres on the helpfulness of these comments in understanding how grading decisions had been reached.

External Verifiers have commended centres on their encouragement of candidates to access a wide variety of external agencies to support them in their projects. This allows candidates to have a diversity of pathways within their projects and helps in generating evidence of skills development.

Administration of assessments

Generally, centres have a sound understanding of the requirements of internal verification. The assessment of Expressive Arts projects has been part of processes already set up in many of the presenting centres. There are some excellent examples of co-operative working between departments, or between centres within the same local authority, to carry out both assessment and robust internal verification. This approach has provided support to staff within centres in understanding and applying national standards.

There is evidence of strong partnerships developing between centres and colleges, universities and businesses. These links have allowed candidates to access facilities and expertise, and have provided them with opportunities to access less familiar learning environments. In some cases, staff from external links have been involved in the assessment process, further strengthening the assessment decisions and enhancing cross-sector relationships.

Areas of good practice

External Verifiers have commented that they continue to see creative and original projects being carried out by the candidates. Projects this year included themes around video games, fashion, media and dance.

On the whole, the feedback given to candidates by assessors continues to be high quality, contributing to making it a rewarding experience for candidates. The enthusiasm demonstrated in the assessor comments also contributes to the motivation of the candidates and consequently their success.

Centres were commended by External Verifiers on the richness of assessor comments directing External Verifiers and giving insight to the assessor's thoughts in the grading process.

Candidates are being encouraged to make good connections across disciplines and to link with a wide range of subjects. Also, external agencies were accessed imaginatively and usefully. These collegial links are instrumental in allowing candidates to access some grading criteria. The impressive use of some of these links has been commented on by External Verifiers in their report to relevant centres.

Specific areas for improvement

Centres should encourage candidates to utilise a variety of primary research methods to gather data and information, as there is often an over-reliance on surveys.

Candidates should be encouraged, where projects have developed along lines different from the original proposal and plan, to include timelines, contingencies and dependencies for any new strands of the project.