



# **Internal Assessment Report: Mechanical (212)**

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

# Higher National Units

## General comments

All centres were aware and fully understood the requirements of the Higher National Standards as set by SQA for Cognate Group 212.

It was noted that all centres which were verified were experienced in the delivery and had experienced recent EV visits.

Assessors within all centres demonstrated a wide knowledge and experience of using and interpreting the Course documentation and materials.

In some cases centres employed staff with extensive industrial experience to enrich Course content and teaching methods.

In all cases centres supplied details of Course meetings, at which staff shared ideas and good practice across the departments.

No centre visited this session was subject to a hold on certification, due to assessors making reliable and valid assessment decisions.

All centres that were visited during the 2009/10 session demonstrated a clear understanding of the evidence requirements of all the Units delivered in the current session.

In most cases all centres had student materials ready for verifying. However, due to the timing of visits, some only had Course materials to review.

In all cases the assessments used in all centres were deemed to be at an appropriate level. All centres demonstrated robust control and administration of assessments, and assessments currently used were deemed valid.

Centres demonstrated good control of all assessments and employed a variety of Internal Verification procedures to ensure all candidates' work meets the national standards.

In all cases robust IV systems were being employed across the sector.

A number of centres engaged in cross marking of candidates' evidence to ensure all work met the college/national standards.

All centres employed, where necessary, a variety of feedback mechanisms to ensure candidates gained feedback on their performance while on the Course.

A number of candidates were interviewed about the Course(s) they were taking, and in the majority of cases indicated that they were enjoying the Unit(s) and felt that they were given a good introduction and explanations of how the Course is delivered and assessed.

In one case, one centre employed excellent access to their assessments, with alternative assessment arrangements for candidates who required greater support. The support put in place – ie learning plans – was for students whose first language was not English.

### **Areas of good practice**

In a number of cases centres displayed a good integrated approach to learning, encompassing a number of Units and allowing candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their subject knowledge through more complex laboratory/report assessments.

In all cases, delivery of Units was well documented, and in most cases clear, structured lesson plans provided clear guidance on the delivery of Units and their relevance.

A number of centres are increasingly using VLE technology to enhance delivery methods.

### **Areas for improvement**

Across all centres visited this year there have been no significant areas of improvement identified, with all centres producing good standards of work and record keeping in relation to student work and Internal Verification.

Where any improvements have been identified, these have been noted in the report later.

# Higher National Graded Units

## Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified

DV12 35      Mechanical Graded Unit 2

### General comments

The two centres which were verified were aware and fully understood the requirements of the Higher National Standards as set by SQA for Cognate Group 212. Again it was noted that all centres which were verified were experienced in the delivery and had experienced recent EV visits.

Both centres demonstrated a good knowledge and interpretation of the Course documentation and materials.

No centre visited this session was subject to a hold on certification, due to assessors making reliable and valid assessment decisions.

Both centres which were verified during the 2009/10 session demonstrated a clear understanding of the evidence requirements of all the Units delivered in the current session.

In all cases the assessments used in all centres were deemed of an appropriate level.

All centres demonstrated robust control of administration of assessments, and validity of all assessments currently used.

Centres demonstrated good control of all assessments and employed a variety of Internal Verification procedures to ensure all candidates' work meets the national standards.

In all cases excellent records were kept of scheduled meetings of candidates and project supervisors, which were shown with clear notes, actions and feedback given.

Assessors also discussed current External Verification processes in relation to the overall college system and to Internal Verification of candidates' work, ie timing and frequency. It was noted that in some cases visits were undertaken with no/little evidence, or incomplete/work in progress evidence, present. This is due to EVs having visits organised well in advance and candidates not completing work in appropriate timescales.

### Areas of good practice

In both instances centres and students undertook good active industrial-based project work relating to individual companies.

In one centre, presentations were given in a purposeful presentation arena within the college. This gave a more realistic and professional event and allowed local companies to attend and engage with the candidates during the presentations.

## **Areas for improvement**

Though not aimed at any centre, further clarification is required from SQA/QST on the marking guidelines in relation to the grading of the project and how to award the percentage mark within each grade.

Certain centres demonstrated, through their own checklist, appropriate marking against each criteria as stated by SQA. Each point has been given a mark between 0-3, as stated in the SQA marking guidelines.

However, it was noted and discussed that a candidate could in theory submit their project and not present their findings via an oral presentation, and attain a grade mark of A without undertaking the important part of presenting the project to their peers.

Further to this, the centre has attempted to level the marking within each grade to present to candidates their mark as a percentage, and were looking for a national standard, if applicable across the sector.

Guidance is required to ensure a national standard is set, ensuring that all candidates are judged equally. Can this be discussed at next QST as a development point for clarity? How are other centres tackling this issue?