



**Higher National Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2014  
Catering and Hospitality**

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

# Higher National Units

## General comments

All centres selected for external verification have demonstrated a consistent commitment to providing a quality approach to delivery and assessment of the Units verified within the Hospitality Management framework.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Internal quality assurance systems operated by all the centres that were reviewed confirm that tutors/assessors and internal verifiers have the necessary resources (SQA Unit specification, exemplar) to undertake the delivery of each Unit.

Centres approach the delivery and assessment of Units in different ways. Some have developed unique online tracking systems to help support candidates, whilst other centres utilise traditional methods. All the approaches reviewed are robust and ensure that candidates are treated fairly and equally.

## Evidence Requirements

All centres chosen for external verification had a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements for each of the Units verified. New tutors/assessors are supported internally and are subject to 100% verification to ensure consistency of assessment.

Evidence also confirms that centres have strict policies on plagiarism and monitor candidate evidence closely.

## Administration of assessments

All centres that were externally verified administered the assessment process in a consistent and professional manner.

From the centres reviewed, there was clear evidence of pre-delivery checklists being utilised with ongoing reviews of delivery and assessment through team meetings and action plans.

Candidate feedback to the External Verifiers from staff and candidates remained positive and informative about the approaches taken within the centres.

Feedback provided from internal verification remained effective and supportive and enabled tutors/assessors to reflect and review their approach to delivery and assessment.

All centres have a standardised approach to internal verification and it was apparent that all centres adopt a 100% rule for new tutors/assessors and/or Unit delivery. Sufficient sampling took place for the remainder.

Second marking in addition to final internal verification was also apparent. Feedback from centres confirms that this allowed staff to reflect on marks being given and to come to a common decision.

### **General feedback**

All centres ensured that there was appropriate access to resources.

There was clear evidence that assessments were being approached in a consistent manner and in accordance with assessment guidelines, and that support mechanisms were in place for candidates.

Candidates who had been interviewed by External Verifiers confirmed that they enjoyed their programme of study and felt supported by staff.

### **Areas of good practice**

External Verifiers reported that some centres demonstrated particular strengths in candidate support activities and consistency of feedback, which was provided in a timely and fair manner.

Centres provided evidence of pre-delivery checklists indicating ongoing reviews of assessment material, meetings and action points being monitored and met.

One centre has devised an innovative tracking system to monitor candidate progress across all areas of study on a weekly basis — a colour-coded traffic light system that highlights when an intervention is required.

Some centres utilise other departments, eg Core Skills and learning support, to allow all candidates the opportunity to attend evaluative writing workshops. Social media was also being utilised by one centre and this was positively received by the student group as user-friendly support and service provision.

### **Specific areas for improvement**

Centres are encouraged to support candidates in identifying other sources of reference material other than internet-based sources, which appeared to be the sole source of referencing for some centres.

# Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

DL4H 34	Hospitality Graded Unit 1
DL4K 35	Hospitality Graded Unit 2
DL3G 34	Food & Beverage Service
DL3T 34	Financial & Control systems
DL3A 35	Managing Financial Resources
DL3C 35	Accommodation Management
H198 34	Hospitality Supervision
H1L7 34	Hospitality Industry

## General comments

Outcomes for the external verification visits remain positive and centres have continued to demonstrate a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards for each of the Units verified.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

It was clearly noted that all tutors/assessors and internal verifiers selected for external verification had a detailed knowledge of the current SQA Graded Unit specifications and exemplars.

The instruments of assessment selected by the centres are valid, fair and reliable.

Evidence produced by centres demonstrated that the centres proactively updated their internal quality policies and systems either in electronic format or in a master folder to ensure that consistency of practice was being maintained.

## Evidence Requirements

Staff involved with the assessment and internal verification at the centres that were selected for external verification proved knowledgeable of the Unit specifications and Assessment Strategy and engaged themselves in ensuring that internal quality systems were in place for the delivery of each Graded Unit.

## Administration of assessments

All centres complied with the three submission dates for the Hospitality Graded Unit and on the majority of occasions these were second-marked before being internally verified.

It was reported that not all centres had a structured internal verification system in place, although training was in place to enable this to happen and there was evidence of candidate work being internally sampled.

It was generally noted that feedback from assessors to candidates was supportive and feedback from internal verifiers to assessors was consistent.

One centre had difficulty motivating their candidates to stay focused on the Hospitality Graded Unit and it was suggested that external visits could encourage and support candidate awareness of the considerations required for the particular case study.

The approach to marking seemed to differ between centres. The SQA-devised marking scheme was being utilised by all centres to operate a holistic approach to marking. Some centres had broken down the marking scheme within this template to help internal standardisation and ensure that all tutors/assessors in the centre were marking in a consistent and fair manner.

Centres chosen for external verification demonstrated a timeous manner in marking candidate work and providing feedback. Internal verification demonstrated the same timeous fashion. Sample size varied according to centre policies.

Centres have been encouraged to support other sources of support material other than internet referencing to allow the candidate to build a broader spectrum of knowledge and understanding from books, journals, external facilities etc.

The use of candidate log books appears to have been adopted by a number of centres to support the tracking of candidates undertaking the Graded Unit. The evidence seen by External Verifiers within these log books included clear and constructive feedback to candidates; and discussion with the candidates demonstrated that they were good prompts for unambiguous advice.

### **General feedback**

Centres accommodated External Verifier visits by making staff available for discussion. These proved beneficial to all participants and External Verifiers were able to gain further insight into delivery methods and to advise staff in effective ways forward.

It was noted that one centre provided more than one case study across the groups of candidates. It was suggested that only one need be given out each year and that any concerns over plagiarism should be addressed internally and by utilising systems such as Turnitin.

External Verifiers commented on the dissemination of quality assurance reports amongst the team members as part of the meeting schedule. Those unable to attend were e-mailed and/or provided hard copies in the staff room to ensure that dissemination of information took place to all associated parties.

It was encouraging to see that access to candidates had increased from previous years and that feedback provided was supportive of centre delivery and support mechanisms in place. In one centre, some candidates commented on the size of

the Graded Unit project and felt that a practical element of assessment would be favoured.

One centre provided an ICT room specifically for GU candidates, which was favoured by the candidate group.

## **Areas of good practice**

External Verifiers reported that some centres demonstrated particular strengths in candidate support activities and consistency of feedback, which was timeous and fair.

Most centres provided evidence of pre-delivery checklists, indicating ongoing reviews of assessment material, meetings and action points.

One centre has devised an innovative tracking system to monitor candidate progress across all areas of study on a weekly basis — a colour-coded traffic light system.

Some centre's utilise other departments, eg Core Skills and learning support, to allow all candidates the opportunity to attend evaluative writing workshops. Social media was also being utilised by one centre and this was positively received by the student group as user-friendly support and service provision.

It is recognised that centres are utilising online methods for storing guidance and support material, assignments and deadlines through systems such as Mahara, Moodle and Blackboard VLEs.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

Centres are encouraged to support candidates to identify sources of reference material other than internet-based sources, which appeared to be the sole source of referencing for some centres.

One centre outcome indicated that the timings for the submission of the Graded Unit needed reflection as stage two was considered restrictive and stage three too long. This is a centre-specific consideration since each centre sets its own submission boundaries for assessments following review of SQA assessment requirements.

Technological issues affected delivery in one centre where candidates raised concerns about interface problems and the tendency for the system to be temperamental. It is important to ensure that methods of delivery are appropriately working and that a back-up is used when things do not go to plan.