



Internal Assessment Report 2010: Management Skills (243)

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

Verification activity during 2009–10 indicated that centres have a good general understanding of Unit specifications and the role they play in determining national standards. All centres in this verification group have considerable experience of delivering Units at HN level and have well established internal verification procedures to monitor assessment.

Centres are well aware of relevant Unit specifications and other SQA material such as exemplar assessments. There can sometimes be a little confusion when a Unit is replaced with one of the same title (eg Supervision and Management).

Centres understand the role of Evidence Requirements and make good use of SQA support materials which help greatly in translating the Evidence Requirements into workable instruments of assessment and in clarifying other parts of a Unit specification. However, despite this, centres do not always find it easy to make assessment judgments which are appropriate to the SCQF level of a Unit. This can lead to standards being set too high as well as accepting work which barely reaches an appropriate level.

Assessments are normally set at an appropriate level where centres follow the exact requirements of exemplar assessment materials and support this with robust internal verification. Good exemplar assessment materials ensure that all knowledge/skills items are covered and all aspects of the Evidence Requirements are met. They also take into account the SCQF level of the Unit. Robust internal verification requires quick and effective feedback, which is sometimes less likely when internal verification activity only takes place when all assessment judgments have been made.

There were very few EV visits in this verification group during 2009–10. This makes it hard to draw many general conclusions. However, the following general points did come through:

- ◆ Centres take their responsibilities for assessment seriously and work hard to fulfil them.
- ◆ If difficulties arise (eg collusion between candidates) centres respond appropriately.
- ◆ Candidates were always very happy with the learning experience they have received.

Areas of good practice

Previous reports have commented on the good practice shown by centres in the organisation of assessment, eg the use of a master folder and implementation of sound IV procedures. These have continued. It was also apparent that centres

are good at tailoring assessments in general Units (eg project management) to situations which make sense to candidates. Making assessment tasks relevant to candidate experience greatly facilitates the learning experience for candidates.

Areas for improvement

The main area where centres could develop their practice is to ensure that assessment decisions are made at a level appropriate to the SCQF rating of the Unit. It is difficult to make many other comments because of the small number of EV visits, but there would seem to be scope to enhance the feedback given by Assessors to candidates and by IVs to Assessors. Meaningful feedback, in both instances, may help to ensure that suitable standards are set and maintained.