



**Higher National and Vocational Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2015  
Bricklaying**

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

# Higher National Units

## General comments

Staff at all centres continue to have a comprehensive understanding of the National Occupational Standards which link to the Higher National Units being delivered in the Advanced Craft in Bricklaying qualification.

Discussions with candidates at centres, confirmed their knowledge and understanding of the standards, tolerances, performance and knowledge required for each Unit within the qualification.

Candidates found the standards challenging but achievable. Candidates confirmed that they were enjoying the course and the work they had undertaken so far.

However, at one centre the External Verifier reported that specimen answers should be produced with allocated marks for the assignments within the qualification. This would assist in the standardisation of allocation of marks for both drawings and written answers and would enable candidates to have a clearer understanding of what they needed to do to achieve.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessors at all centres sampled have a comprehensive knowledge of each Unit specification and its SQA-devised Training and Assessment Programme (TAP) which supports the delivery of assessment.

Candidate evidence sampled included candidate TAP assessment records and practical workshop evidence and confirmed that assessors had a clear focus on the demands of each Unit.

## Evidence Requirements

The evidence requirements of each Unit were being met consistently by staff at reviewed centres. Effective assessment and verification procedures ensured that the assessment process complied fully with all Unit and SQA requirements.

A systematic approach to internal verification planning and reporting covering all Units in the qualification, greatly contributed to ensuring that assessment decisions were accurate and consistent at all centres.

All evidence sampled confirmed that each Unit's evidence requirements are understood by staff at all centres visited for the HN Advanced Bricklaying qualification.

## Administration of assessments

All centres continue to administer assessments in a professional and systematic manner.

Effective quality assurance procedures at centres ensure an ongoing focus on assessment environments, resourcing and candidate portfolio building. These processes are again underpinned by supportive internal verification monitoring and reporting.

### **General feedback**

Candidates commented favourably on the delivery of the Advanced Craft Bricklaying qualification and expressed that they had enjoyed the work they had been given during the course and most hoped to continue their studies to a higher level.

### **Areas of good practice**

- ◆ The systematic approach to internal verification planning and reporting covering all Units in the qualification, greatly contributed to ensuring that assessment decisions were accurately and consistently reported at all centres

### **Specific areas for improvement**

- ◆ Ensuring that specimen answers are produced with allocated marks for the assignments involved within this qualification

# SVQ awards

## General comments

Almost all external verification reports confirmed that centres have a clear, comprehensive and accurate understanding the National Occupational Standards relating to individual Units and the requirement of the Training and Assessment Programme (TAP) which supports the delivery of the Bricklaying SVQ.

Staff at almost all centres understood how the information obtained from Candidate Records of Evidence from the Workplace (CREWs) and evidence from Phase Tests supported the ongoing development of practical skills and generic behavioural competences.

However, there was a lack evidence of assessment feedback for underpinning knowledge questions, associated subjects and CREWS reported at one centre.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Staff at almost all centres sampled had a thorough knowledge of Unit specifications and the requirements of each Unit's TAP assessment.

The industry-devised Units H109 12 Construction Craft Competence Assessment and H10A 12 Construction Crafts Employability Skills are being delivered effectively by staff at almost all centres sampled.

## Evidence Requirements

Almost all centres have a clear understanding of the evidence requirements of the Bricklaying SVQ Units and their TAPs.

However, at more than a few centres, candidate knowledge and practical assessment records were not always signed and dated by the assessor, the candidate and where appropriate the internal verifier, to fulfil the evidence requirements of Units and the Construction Industry Assessment Methodology.

One External Verifier reported that there was insufficient evidence available to confirm the reliability or consistency of assessment decisions for underpinning knowledge outcomes, CREWs and associated subjects at one centre.

At one centre, there was limited second year candidate underpinning knowledge evidence to evaluate. In addition there was no evidence other than a completed checklist to confirm that there was any CREW activity taking place.

At one centre the External Verifier reported that candidates should be encouraged to improve sketching quality within CREWs where photographic evidence is unavailable.

First year candidates at one centre required to be re-assessed for traditional cavity-wall, door and window openings Practical Assessment 1 due to the test specification not being full addressed.

## **Administration of assessments**

External verification reporting confirmed that assessments are being administered effectively and assessment record keeping and retention of evidence is systematic with all assessment records and evidence being readily available at almost all centres verified.

At most centres, supportive internal verification activity ensured that all evidence requirements are being met consistently and effectively by assessors.

## **General feedback**

Discussions with candidates during verification visits confirmed that feedback from practical and knowledge assessments was appreciated and that Phase Tests and CREWs were working well at almost all centres.

However, there were major difficulties experienced by one External Verifier in agreeing an alternative visit date after the initial scheduled visit was cancelled due to a staff absence. The visit finally took place towards the end of the academic session when no candidates, assessors or internal verifiers were available for professional discussions.

## **Areas of good practice**

- ◆ Good candidate support mechanisms were reported at one centre
- ◆ Internal verification of candidate practical work was planned to coincide with the external verification visit. Initial verbal feedback was observed from internal verifier to the assessor and the assessor to candidates
- ◆ Assessor's vocational CPD up-skilling in Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS)
- ◆ Extensive e-skills learning mechanisms were in place at one centre, for staff to record CPD. This was monitored and checked by the centre's HR department making sure the staff maintained their records up to date for the academic year
- ◆ The extremely high standard and detail of feedback given to candidates after completion of the practical assessments was reported at three centres
- ◆ The very high standard of candidate practical brickwork evidence on display was reported at two centres
- ◆ The use of formative tutorials and assessments to identify student needs and support at an early stage of their training was noted at one centre
- ◆ Staff undertaking job shadowing on construction sites to maintain their currency of knowledge was reported at one centre

## **Specific areas for improvement**

- ◆ Training and Assessment Programme practical and knowledge evidence records were not always signed and dated by candidates, assessors and where appropriate internal verifiers

- ◆ Candidates risk-assessing all practical training and assessments including all 1st, 2nd & 3rd
- ◆ Assessors ensuring that all secondary photographic evidence complies fully with all health & safety legislations
- ◆ Internal verifiers producing detailed sampling plans
- ◆ Effective internal verifier feedback to assessors
- ◆ Regular standardisation meetings, minutes and documentation
- ◆ Ensuring that all candidate knowledge and practical assessment evidence is signed and dated by the assessor, the candidate and where appropriate the internal verifier to fulfil the evidence requirements of Units and the Construction Industry Assessment Methodology
- ◆ Remedial practical assessment activity being clearly identified on the practical assessment checklist and feedback forms
- ◆ Photographic evidence of work processes as well as the finished product being included in candidate portfolios