



**Higher National Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2014  
Travel and Tourism**

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

The following Units were verified during visits to three presenting centres in 2013–14. In total, 13 Unit deliveries were reported on.

DK0H 34	Visitor Attraction Operations
DK03 34	Providing Information on the Scottish Tourism Product
DJ9W 34	Structure of the Travel and Tourism Industry (two centres)
DJ9T 34	Tour Guiding and Resort Representation (three centres)
DJ9P 35	Tour Operations (two centres)
F6VY 34	Air Travel
F6VX 35	Air Travel Advanced
H0RC 34	Preparation for Employment in Travel and Tourism (two centres)

Significant strengths were reported in all centres. This would indicate that there is a clear and accurate understanding of the national standard requirements of the Units in centres.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The evidence presented in the centres that were visited indicated that centre staff are familiar with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials. In most centres, nationally devised assessment exemplar packs were being used and the marking guidelines had been adhered to and applied in accordance with SQA requirements.

## Evidence Requirements

In all centres, the correct Unit specifications and assessment exemplification packs were being used. It was concluded that, generally, centre staff understand the Evidence Requirements for the Units.

## Administration of assessments

Assessments were planned well in advance and there were sufficient opportunities for undertaking remediation, second attempts, and the sitting of missed assessments. Assessment decisions were, in the main, appropriate and in keeping with national standards. Where Units had not been completed, the available evidence was in keeping with the Unit delivery schedules. There was also significant evidence to demonstrate that centres were undertaking internal verification and that there were close working relationships and a clear understanding of verification systems in centres.

## **General feedback**

Robust and supportive internal verification systems were in place in all centres, including standardisation meetings where delivery issues and assessment use are decided prior to and during delivery. Internal verification records were all maintained securely and included internal verification reports, the internal verification cycle and course minutes, which ensured everything was available on the day of the visit.

Feedback to candidates was generally clear and constructive.

Candidates were always positive when commenting on administration of the assessment process. They confirmed that tutors gave adequate prior notice of assessment, its requirements and how they should prepare for it. Assessment conditions and the remediation process were well understood by candidates. Candidates also confirmed that tutor feedback took place within an acceptable timescale and was helpful and supportive. Candidates' evidence submissions were well presented and referenced.

## **Areas of good practice**

There were fewer examples of good practice available this year within the sample size of three centres. However, the following was noted in Unit **DJ9T 34 Tour Guiding and Resort Representation**:

- ◆ One centre presented evidence using combined video recording and checklist with comment on performance
- ◆ Another centre had combined oral presentations in this Unit with assessment in a communications Unit

## **Specific areas for improvement**

During 2013–14, we also identified the following areas for improvement.

For all Units, centres must ensure candidates are producing their own work and are aware that plagiarism and copying work from any source is not acceptable. 'Cut and paste' from the internet is particularly undesirable. Candidates should be asked to sign home-based assessments to confirm that the assessments are their own work. Also in this context, referencing is still a problem. Candidates should be encouraged to reference their work and complete a bibliography.

Clearer recording of remediation and assessors' subsequent decisions are required to identify where additional knowledge and understanding have been generated.

With reference to specific Units:

### **DJ9W 34 Structure of the Travel and Tourism Industry**

In demonstrating an understanding of the evolution of the industry candidates' evidence should focus on examples of specific historical development in their chosen areas as opposed to generic commentary.

### **DK03 34 Providing Information on the Scottish Tourism Product**

Candidates not achieving the required cut-off scores in the closed-book assessment tests for Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 at the first attempt must sit an alternative unseen test. Centres must develop alternative assessment instruments for re-assessment purposes. This has been reported in previous years but is still a recurring problem.

### **DJ9T 34 Tour Guiding and Resort Representation**

Where it is not possible to do a live tour for the assessment of Outcome 4, a role-play in which the candidate delivers a short guided tour using oral and group handling skills, would be the most effective way to provide the required performance evidence.

# Higher National Graded Units

The following Graded Units were verified during visits to 11 presenting centres in 2014.

H1J6 34	Travel and Tourism Graded Unit 1 (7 centres)
H1J7 35	Travel and Tourism Graded Unit 2 (6 centres)
DK0A 35	Tourism Graded Unit 2
F6J1 34	Activity Tourism Graded Unit 1

Significant strengths in all centres visited were reported.

## General comments

All presenting centres experienced successful verification of their Graded Units. There was a good understanding of the requirements of the Graded Units. In general, the move to the revised Graded Units has been successful.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Master packs, usually stored electronically, were comprehensive and included internally devised forms. These detailed procedures for assessment and re-assessment, teaching and learning methods, learning resources, assessment conditions, assessment instruments, marking, assessment solutions, and learning and teaching schedules.

## Evidence Requirements

Staff in centres had a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements.

## Administration of assessments

In most cases, the most up-to-date SQA assessment exemplar packs had been used. Candidates had completed the planning and development stages and tutor judgement of candidate performance was generally appropriate. Candidates confirmed to us that they had fair access to assessment and remediation arrangements. Standardisation of assessment decisions was confirmed through the internal verification process. Internal verification processes were applied consistently in accordance with centre procedures. The assessment decisions for the Graded Units that were sampled were satisfactory for the stages that had been completed.

## General feedback

External Verifiers advised all centres that the visits had been successful and commented that in several cases the centres' prior preparation had helped make the visits straightforward. Internal documentation was organised efficiently and

records were up to date. In all cases, marking was confirmed as fair and met national standards. Tutors had provided candidates with good feedback and made constructive comments where appropriate.

The changes made to the second year Graded Unit appear to have been successful. Candidates were again found to be producing an interesting range of original topics, which clearly demonstrated their ability to apply the knowledge and skills learned during their programme in a practical task.

EVs highlighted good practice in most reports and continue to note robust and supportive internal verification systems in place. These included standardisation meetings where delivery issues and assessment use were decided prior to and during delivery. Internal verification records were all maintained securely on centre intranet systems and included internal verification reports, the internal verification cycle and course minutes.

Candidates reported that they generally found the project a good experience which gave them a sense of personal achievement, although some expressed a preference for one of the Graded Units to be an examination. They felt that the Graded Unit project linked well to the subjects in the HND programme and prepared them for progression to employment and/or university.

## **Areas of good practice**

In several centres the following examples of good practice were noted:

- ◆ Assessors and internal verifiers meeting frequently thus demonstrating that review and improvement of delivery is constant
- ◆ As highlighted in previous years but still applicable — preparation for verification visits by centre quality assurance staff was commendable
- ◆ In several centres we identified good use of VLEs to support and guide candidates outside class time. Submission of the various stages via the VLE ensured candidates were aware of deadlines and the use of Turnitin software helped to ensure the authenticity of candidates' work
- ◆ Three centres in which the assessor had developed a dual system of checklists to confirm that candidates met the minimum evidence and the marks allocated met the grade criteria

We also noted the following examples of good practice in specific centres:

- ◆ Internal verification forms completed online and made available to all staff teaching on the HND programme
- ◆ Use of a professional discussion diary which recorded meetings with the assessor and discussion points
- ◆ Timetabled Graded Unit classes to ensure regular contact with assessors
- ◆ With specific reference to F6J1 34 Activity Tourism Graded Unit 1, one centre identifies a new topic for analysis every year. This ensured topicality and

candidate learning was enhanced through a series of relevant experiential visits to activity tourism attractions

### **Specific areas for improvement**

Verifiers made the following recommendations:

Wherever possible, timetabling mandatory Units in the first teaching block to give candidates knowledge and understanding required for the Graded Unit.

Application of more holistic approaches when marking projects to ensure they meet the grade criteria as stated in the Unit specification. Centres are encouraged to develop extended checklists to assist in making holistic decisions which focus on grade criteria. These should be regarded as supplementary when determining grades. Sometimes straightforward marking through single mark allocation can distort grades.

Use of VLE/Turnitin software as part of delivery, if not currently doing so.

It is suggested that the use of log books should be more extensive and become candidate-driven. Although there is no longer a mark for the completed log book it can be useful in making judgements on the level of support required and the candidate's ability to reflect and evaluate.

Tutors should ensure any Graded Unit guidelines reflect your centre's policy on quality assurance and are clearly explicit with regard to rules on late submission and grading following remediation.

Candidates should complete declarations to confirm the work was their own at each stage of the project, not just at the evaluation stage.

Finally, with specific reference to **H1J6 34 Travel and Tourism Graded Unit 1:**

- ◆ The planning stage should include detailed timescale plans to give the candidates the opportunity to fully evaluate their plan. Travel selections only — centres should ensure that the customer pack has a detailed final costing for the customer
- ◆ In some centres candidate analysis of industry structure and its relevance to the project was weak

With reference to **H1J7 35 Travel and tourism Graded Unit 2:**

- ◆ Tutors should provide careful guidelines when considering candidates' choice of topic for study to ensure that they have sound support from their industry contact and that it will be possible to obtain primary statistical information related to the business organisation
- ◆ Some scripts failed to cite sources — consider how referencing could be improved