



Internal Assessment Report 2010: Practical Craft Skills (318)

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

National Courses

Titles/levels of National Courses verified

Woodworking Skills (Intermediate1 and 2)
Engineering Craft Skills (Intermediate1 and 2)

General comments

It is clear that the vast majority of presenting centres are comfortable with, and have a clear understanding of, the standards expected for assessment at Intermediate 1 and 2 for both Woodworking Skills and Engineering Craft Skills.

This is reflected in the high percentage of centres whose internal assessment is deemed to be accepted with no discrepancies during the verification process.

Where there has been any confusion between levels, visiting verifiers have addressed this and agreement has been reached with the centre.

The vast majority of assessors are very familiar with Course Arrangements, are clear on Unit content, and are competent in using appropriate instruments of assessment to assess prescribed Learning Outcomes.

With only a few exceptions, centres are using exemplar materials and NABs issued by SQA, thus ensuring consistency across the country.

Where a centre has been using an instrument of assessment of their own design, this has been prior-verified and is consistent with exemplification materials.

While most centres are comfortable with Evidence Requirements and their retention, there are still some centres who do not appear to understand that evidence retention is governed by the Unit completion dates. The individual centres submit these to SQA, and all evidence must be retained for three weeks after the submitted date.

There are no major issues with regards evidence for Course projects.

All centres work from the grade descriptors issued by SQA. This ensures consistency and allows everyone to assess work at the appropriate level, with regards to processes, tolerances applied and quality of finish.

Many centres have internal verification procedures in place which are consistent and available for scrutiny. This, however, is not universal and a number of centres would benefit from formalising their procedures to ensure that reliable, robust evidence of internal verification is available.

Areas of good practice

Generally the quality of student work has improved year after year and is regularly highlighted in the visiting verifiers' reports.

In an attempt to give students more ownership of the Course, many centres issue student handbooks which give clear instructions on requirements and expectations within the Course. These include areas for self- and teacher assessment, thus ensuring meaningful and constructive feedback.

Most centres now ensure all students supply working drawings for any individual design, eg turnery for clock.

Good internal verification procedures involve cross marking, sampling and feedback with a detailed record being kept.

In many cases, Course summary assessment sheets are being extended to give more individual student detail, with reasons for grades applied. This assists greatly during the visiting verification procedure.

Areas for improvement

As stated earlier, there is a need for some centres to improve on internal verification policy to ensure a robust system is in place.

Any alterations to overall dimensions or dimensions of materials used in construction of models must be reflected in all working drawings.

When welding, centres must ensure continuous runs, not tacking, and should not undertake processes they are ill equipped to deliver.

Centres should be aware that the difference between a good grade and a very good grade is liable to be down to finish. Finish is an area where there is still some scope for improvement. At times there is still evidence of pencil lines, poor finish to end grain, lack of de-burring, rounded edges, etc.

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified

Flat Frame Construction (Intermediate 1 and 2)
Carcase Construction (Intermediate 1 and 2)
Machining and Finishing (Intermediate 1 and 2)
Fabrication and Thermal Joining (Intermediate 1 and 2)
Machine Processes: Metal (Intermediate 1 and 2)

General comments

It is clear that the vast majority of presenting centres are comfortable with, and have a clear understanding of, the standards expected for assessment at Intermediate 1 and 2 in the Units contributing to Woodworking Skills and Engineering Craft Skills.

Centres, in the main, are adhering very closely to the guidelines and criteria issued by SQA to ensure a consistency when assessing Unit work.

The vast majority of assessors are very familiar with Unit Arrangements, are clear on Unit content, and are competent in using appropriate instruments of assessment to assess prescribed Learning Outcomes.

With only a few exceptions, centres are using exemplar materials and NABs issued by SQA, thus ensuring consistency across the country.

Where a centre has been using an instrument of assessment of their own design, this has been prior-verified and is consistent with exemplification materials.

While most centres are comfortable with Evidence Requirements and their retention, there are still some centres that do not appear to understand that evidence retention is governed by the Unit completion dates. The individual centre submits these to SQA, and all evidence must be retained for three weeks after the Unit completion date submitted.

All centres work from the grade descriptors issued by SQA. This ensures consistency and allows everyone to assess work at the appropriate level, with regards to processes, tolerances applied and quality of finish.

Many centres have good internal verification procedures in place, which are consistent and available for scrutiny. This, however, is not universal, and a number of centres would benefit from formalising their procedures to ensure that reliable, robust evidence of internal verification is available.

There has been a definite improvement in the quality and quantity of evidence available to assist the visiting verification process.

Areas of good practice

It is good to report that the quality of student work at Unit level continues to improve. Centres, again, are making good use of informative handbooks, which give clear instructions on requirements and expectations within the Unit.

Good internal verification procedures are evident in some centres.

Good detailed records are being kept, by the majority of centres, on student performance in each Learning Outcome contained within the Unit.

Some centres are supplying evidence of practice materials, particularly in welding, which is useful for the verification exercise.

Specific attention has been drawn to the good use of jigs within centres and some excellent use of lathe, both in Engineering and Woodworking.

Areas for improvement

As stated earlier, there is a need for some centres to improve on internal verification procedures.

Centres must ensure that Unit completion dates submitted to SQA match actual Unit delivery dates. This will ensure that evidence will be available for verification.

Centres should strive to spread completion dates for Units; this would assist in reducing storage issues.

Most centres use written tests supplied in NAB exemplars. These tests have cut-off scores for different levels. If, however, a centre has developed their own test, they must ensure cut-off scores are available.

Centres must ensure evidence is available for **all** Learning Outcomes contained within the individual Units.

Welding still lacks consistency from centre to centre. This tends to tie in with time spent practising the skill.

Centres should refrain from applying paint finishes before verification.