



Internal Assessment Report: Practical Craft Skills

Assessment Panel: Technical Education

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

National Units

Titles/levels of National Units verified

Verification Group: Practical Craft Skills 318

Woodworking Skills

D183 10: Wood Carcase Construction

D183 11: Wood Carcase Construction

D184 10: Machining and Finishing — Wood

D184 11: Machining and Finishing — Wood

Engineering Craft Skills

D179 10: Machine Processes — Metal

D179 11: Machine Processes — Metal

D180 10: Fabrication and Thermal Joining Techniques

D180 11: Fabrication and Thermal Joining Techniques

Feedback to centres

General comments

As with previous years, Unit verification was conducted in conjunction with Course Project verification. No centres were selected for stand-alone Unit verification.

On the whole, the evidence for Unit verification was of a good standard, comparable with that produced for Course Project verification.

It has to be reported however, that a very small number of centres struggled to produce the required evidence to SQA prescribed standards, resulting in a 'Not Accepted' status. Visiting verifiers made recommendations, and following revisits all centres were 'Accepted'.

The difficulties were mainly due to the following:

- ◆ Centres not being fully aware of requirements for Unit verification.
- ◆ Administration and record-keeping not being carried out and maintained as required.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development

Centres should ensure they are fully aware which Unit is being verified. This should be made clear during initial contact with the visiting verifier.

Most centres have adopted the technique of recording progress and assessment in the form of a checklist. The benefits of this are three-fold as it allows candidate, teacher and visiting verifier to see at a glance what has been achieved and which Outcomes have still to be completed. Centres are encouraged to use this method of recording progress.

All centres should be aware that for successful verification of a Unit there should be candidate evidence of assessment for all Outcomes within that Unit, whether written or practical, and all instruments of assessment should be available.

Centres should not release work to candidates for removal until after verification or the prescribed time for retention of the evidence. All evidence should be retained for three weeks after the completion date. (Refer to SQA documentation for retention of evidence.)

Centres should ensure that their completion dates comply with those dates submitted to SQA, as these are the dates which will be used to determine verification visits.

Centres should ensure that all working drawings are accurate and reflect the artefact being constructed. Any alterations should be noted, eg changes to material or artefact dimensions.

Any student design input should be accompanied by accurate drawings, and in the case of turnery/shaped material a template may also be included.

If a centre intends using its own instrument of assessment for Unit assessment then they would be advised to apply for prior verification from SQA.

Component/coursework in National Courses

Component/coursework verified

Course Project:	Woodworking Skills	C035
	Engineering Craft Skills	C034

Feedback to centres

General comments

As stated in last year's report, Woodworking Skills and Engineering Craft Skills are now well embedded in the vast majority of presenting centres. This has resulted in the Courses being well delivered within the vast majority of centres, where appropriate assessment procedures are in place.

There is ample evidence from verifier reports to suggest that the improvement in the quality of craft skills over the past years is a continuing trend and centres should be commended for this. There is evidence of a very high standard of work in many centres.

There are a large number of withdrawals from the Course, but this would appear to be mainly due to Christmas leavers.

During verification visits presenting staff have expressed their comfort with the Course, both in Course content and their ability to manage and deliver within the timescale. This is reflected in the fact that this year no centres required a revisit for candidates' work on projects that was not progressed enough for verification to take place.

A few centres are still not fully using the Master Record Sheet; they should be encouraged to do so as it is invaluable to the visiting verifier when considering centres' grades for individual candidates during the verification exercise.

It has to be noted that this year a very small number of centres were not in 'Agreement' following the first verifier visit. Like the Unit verification, however, 'Agreement' was reached following advice given and a revisit.

The main reasons for verification being 'Not-Accepted' were poor administration, poor record-keeping and missing evidence.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development

General comments

All staff delivering the Course should be familiar with the Course Arrangements document and all the requirements for Unit and Course assessment.

Centres should maintain a record of student progress that reflects the assessment of all Unit Outcomes.

Centres should ensure they maintain clear differentiation between Skills and Processes at Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2.

If at any stage a centre is unsure regarding any aspect of the Course, then they should seek advice from SQA.

Verification exercise

The purpose of verification is to ensure consistency in assessment. The visiting verifier is there to ensure assessment criteria are being correctly applied by the centre.

When a visiting verifier contacts the centre, the centre should ensure the following:

- ◆ They are fully aware of what is being verified; Unit, Course or both.
- ◆ The verifier is made aware of any issues which may affect the visit.

It is the responsibility of the centre to be prepared for verification. In the case of the Course Project, this will include the following:

- ◆ Appropriate accommodation for the verifier to carry out the verification exercise.
- ◆ A complete VS00 Verification Sample Form.
- ◆ A complete Master Record Sheet — including notes on candidate performance.
- ◆ All other appropriate paperwork — including working drawings.
- ◆ All evidence for candidates on VS00, including substitutes.

If any problems arise in the preparation for the visit, contact SQA to re-arrange the visit.

Woodworking Skills

Most centres tend to use the clock as the preferred Course Project, although there is evidence of the single-door cabinet being used as an alternative, mainly at Intermediate 1, allowing the centre to use the clock for students who progress to Intermediate 2.

There has been a steady improvement in the quality of jointing, in particular the sharpness of shoulders and joint gaps. In some cases there is still work to be done in the alignment and squareness of frame construction. Verifier reports suggest that there is an improvement in the finishing of models, but shaping and preparation for, and application of, finish are still areas of concern.

A good finish is often the factor which distinguishes between a good and an excellent award.

Presenting centres should focus on the following:

- ◆ Finishing internal curves, especially on the clock crown.
- ◆ Ensuring capping pieces on the crown of the clock are matching and attached as per the drawing, this includes chamfer.
- ◆ All chamfers are crisp and not rounded (evidence of planning).
- ◆ All pencil lines are removed.
- ◆ All the pieces are thoroughly sanded before assembly, ensuring not to round corners.
- ◆ Ensure all blemishes are removed before applying finish.
- ◆ A good run-free finish is applied.

There are centres which are not supplying a working drawing and/or template for the turnery aspect of the Course Project. These presenting centres have been advised to ensure this is in place for future visits.

Centres should be aware that wherever there is scope for 'candidates own design' then evidence of that design should be made available in the form of an accurate drawing, and where appropriate, a template.

Engineering Craft Skills

Although lower than Woodworking Skills, the uptake in Engineering Craft Skills is steadily increasing.

The preferred Course Project for most schools is still the bike clamp, but there is evidence that more centres are experimenting with the wind vane and the barbeque set, which is encouraging.

Feedback is very positive for the wind vane, while a few concerns were raised with regards to the amount of sheet metal work involved in the barbeque set. This can lead to congestion at bending and folding equipment, however most centres appear happy with the finished project.

The standard of craft skills is improving, with some centres producing work of a very high standard in the following areas:

- ◆ marking out
- ◆ turning
- ◆ threading
- ◆ folding and forming
- ◆ alignment

In the centres visited, the Course Projects did not reach the high percentage of completion which is achieved in Woodworking Skills. This is an area which requires attention and centres should strive to avoid bottlenecks at welding plants, lathes etc.

A small number of centres are still experiencing difficulty in thermal joining techniques, more specifically welding. There is evidence in some cases of poor continuity of run and of

'spatter'. Centres should try to ensure candidates have had adequate practice before attempting the final weld.

In most cases candidates are producing a 'good' to 'very good' finish to their project. Candidates, however, should be encouraged to ensure a good finish to individual parts as in a few cases there was evidence of vice jaw marks and lack of deburring.

Last year's report highlighted the fact that most centres were not applying a finish to projects prior to verification and this was commended. A few centres, however, are still allowing candidates to apply painted or dip-coating finish to models prior to verification. This should not happen as this type of finish prevents the visiting verifier from fully assessing the quality of the candidate's work.

Practical Electronics

There are still very few centres presenting the Practical Electronics Unit. Verification of this component is carried out by visual inspection of circuitry components and soldering joints with a continuity check.