



Higher National and Vocational Qualifications Internal Assessment Report 2012

Art and Design

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 centres externally verified this session showed good understanding of the requirements of the Units delivered and had appropriate documentation covering all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment.

Awareness of national standards is generally clear; however, in some cases staff would benefit from visiting other centres delivering the same or similar Courses, perhaps when Higher National exhibitions are running, to update their knowledge of the quality and variety of work being produced.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Verification visits revealed that centre staff had a good understanding of Unit specifications. Support materials for staff were available, covering assessment methods, internal verification requirements and Course delivery.

In many centres, candidates had been provided with extensive support materials which detailed assessment requirements and laid out clear schedules suggesting time management techniques that would allow timely completion of the work needed to meet the Performance Criteria.

Good exemplars were provided, showing the standard of work needed to achieve the Units.

Evidence Requirements

The evidence from most centres was focused and highly creative, individual, and of an excellent standard. Some centres, however, need to spend more time on producing the required evidence for the Units, and less time on experimentation.

Knowledge of the Performance Criteria was generally sound in the centres visited.

Administration of assessments

Documentation relating to both assessment and internal verification of evidence was thorough in all centres. Panel assessment of borderline candidates, team marking and shared internal verification ensured consistency of judgement. Clearly laid out candidate support material — detailing Evidence Requirements, Performance Criteria and timescales for assessment — ensured work was on time and of a standard and quantity that facilitated ease of marking.

General feedback

The use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), Moodle and blogs all proved to be effective in providing up-to-date information and feedback to candidates. This

also enabled progress to be effectively monitored while maintaining contact between tutors and candidates outwith class contact time.

Verbal and written feedback was of a good standard and positive comments clarified any potential problems or issues that arose.

All candidates interviewed were enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their Courses and positive about their tutors and the support received.

Areas of good practice

The use of 'live' projects, and the involvement of actual clients discussing the design brief with candidates at the beginning and throughout the project, proved to be both innovative and beneficial, bringing a reality and professionalism to the creative approaches undertaken by candidates.

The use of VLEs, Moodle and blogs is improving the interface between actual tutor contact times, studio-based activities and self-generated study, enabling effective monitoring of work and providing feedback on progress and attainment.

Visits to art galleries and museums and field trips in the UK and abroad are proving effective in raising candidates' awareness and understanding of creativity in reality. These also enable them to tackle projects with a greater knowledge and understanding of the creative possibilities they can employ.

Specific areas for improvement

Where possible, centres with small presentations, or those in remote locations, should carry out cross-establishment visits as part of their continuing professional development for the purpose of comparison of work. It is acknowledged, however, that those centres may have limited opportunities for such visits, and also perhaps for visits to art galleries, museums and exhibitions.

Integrated assessment should be utilised where appropriate, as it can promote greater understanding of transferable skills and may also benefit centres in terms of creating additional time for experimentation and development of ideas.

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified

F0H9 35	Visual Communication: Graded Unit 2
FA6E 34	Visual Communication: Graded Unit 1
F1X2 34	Art and Design: Graded Unit 1
F1X3 35	Art and Design: Graded Unit 2
DX44 34	3D Design: Graded Unit 1
F13R 35	3D Design: Graded Unit 2
DW9X 34	Visual Communication: Graded Unit 1
FA6H 35	Contemporary Art Practice: Graded Unit 2
F1VF 34	Contemporary Art Practice: Graded Unit 1
FA6G 34	Contemporary Art Practice: Graded Unit 1

General comments

All centres had a clear and accurate understanding of requirements of the national standard. Staff were well informed and had provided extensive documentation for Unit delivery, teaching, learning and assessment.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessors demonstrated clear understanding of the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials. They had provided excellent candidate support and explanatory material for these areas. Provision of exemplar material was generally good to excellent.

Evidence Requirements

Accurate assessment of these requirements was evidenced in the portfolios presented for external verification.

Most work was highly individual, creative and presented to a professional standard, easily fulfilling all the necessary criteria and requirements of the Units.

Administration of assessments

Clearly documented procedures for administering assessments were present in all centres; all were at an appropriate level and if any disparity emerged it was usually due to the centre being slightly too severe.

Standardisation of borderline candidates, team marking, blind and double or triple marking was often employed to ensure accuracy.

Moodle was used to monitor, track and update progress and ensure assessment deadlines were met.

Internal verification practices were well established, thorough and recorded; this was often shared or done as a team, resulting in consistency.

General feedback

Candidates' feedback was well structured, frequent and positive, with mentoring comments and comment forms being clear and supportively written.

Candidates spoke enthusiastically of their experience and expressed real enjoyment of the Courses undertaken. All had access to and feedback on assessments carried out. Where 'live' projects were involved, this culminated in positive results, which was reflected in the variety and quality of the work presented.

Areas of good practice

Where candidates had been provided with individual learning logs and personal learning support plans, positive benefits were shown.

One centre operated a 'peer buddy' system, where new intakes were shown around the centre and department on arrival, and the 'buddy' relationship was maintained throughout their time in college.

Where candidates were encouraged to visit the studios and view the work of other disciplines and year groups, this encouraged a feeling of shared interest and led to a positive atmosphere of shared experience.

The use of VLE, Moodle and blogs was seen to be of great benefit in maintaining contact with candidates, ensuring effective liaison and monitoring of progress.

One feature, deemed to be important, was establishing key dates at the start of the Unit for all work, submissions, assessments and mentoring meetings.

Exemplars of previous Graded Unit work proved extremely helpful to candidates, particularly when shown at the start of the Unit.

Specific areas for improvement

To maintain awareness of national standards, new approaches to delivery, variety of briefs and work produced, it is recommended that all staff concerned with Graded Unit delivery, assessment and internal verification visit other centres to see examples and exhibitions of work.