



Higher National and Vocational Qualifications Internal Assessment Report 2012

Construction Engineering

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

Only two centres were programmed for review within this Verification Group this session.

The evidence presented in the External Verifiers' reports confirms that there is clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards in both centres. A single query on interpretation arose, but this was very minor and the External Verifier responded appropriately with consistent, coherent and co-ordinated direction.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All assessors are thoroughly familiar with the full array of Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplar materials. This is clearly demonstrated in all centres by the quality of the design and content of alternate instruments of assessment and associated marking guidelines which have been prepared and internally verified by the centres' staff.

Evidence Requirements

Throughout the entire external verification process this session, there has been no significant instance of misunderstanding or misinterpretation of any of the Evidence Requirements of any of the Units.

Administration of assessments

Both centres have virtually completed uploading all assessment and internal verification documentation into their specific electronic data management systems. Both systems were found to be very efficient and effective and extremely user-friendly. There was an immediate, apparent benefit and enhancement of the assessment and internal verification processes. Each system was commended by the respective External Verifier.

General feedback

In general, feedback to candidates was good. In all cases it was clear, valid and informative. In addition, it was clearly recorded in standard feedback sheets and included in the candidate's portfolio with a copy retained by the assessor.

Candidates all described positive and supportive experiences in the two centres, demonstrating enthusiasm for their studies and positive interactions with staff members.

One centre was commended by the student cohort for its very positive approach to access and support for disadvantaged candidates.

Areas of good practice

As mentioned earlier in this report, the electronic data and information management systems in place in both centres were commended for their usability, effectiveness and convenience. These and similar systems which are currently being developed will supersede the hard copy master folders and control files that are currently embraced by most centres across the sector.

The centres in this Verification Group (161, 163, 164, 117 and 316) are represented on the Built Environment Qualifications Support Team. As a result there is considerable sharing of experience and processes, which benefits the centres and the broader sector.

Specific areas for improvement

There were no widespread deficiencies identified in the EV audit process this session.

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

F08H 34 Civil Engineering Graded Unit 2

General comments

Only one centre was identified for verification review of Graded Units this session. It was clear from all the evidence reviewed that the centre had a clear, accurate and thorough understanding of the requirements of the national standards for the Graded Unit nominated for review.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The assessors were extremely familiar with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplar materials. The centre-prepared materials had been developed to a very high standard in terms of clear and specific instructions to candidates and assessment support materials, including animations of the building used as the subject of the project.

Evidence Requirements

In all circumstances, the assessors and Internal Verifiers demonstrated a complete and comprehensive understanding of the Evidence Requirements for the Unit.

Administration of assessments

As indicated earlier, the centre-prepared instruments of assessment materials have been developed to an extremely high standard, which enhances the student experience and brings a high level of efficiency to the assessment and verification processes.

The centre uses a Moodle system to support candidates to very good effect. This enables candidates to access all Graded Unit support materials remotely. The system is able to identify late submissions and also includes plagiarism software.

General feedback

Feedback to candidates is exemplary, facilitated by the Moodle system.

Candidates confirmed that they had been well supported throughout the Graded Unit project through time-tabled activity, e-mail and drop-in support from assessors. They spoke highly of the benefits of the Graded Unit project in terms of enhancing their time management skills and recognising the importance of meeting deadlines. In addition, they found the project to be a stimulating and

rewarding challenge from which they had gained a comprehensive understanding of the civil engineering discipline and the broader industry.

Areas of good practice

As identified earlier, the quality of the centre-devised assessment materials was commended by the External Verifier.

The Moodle system used to manage and support candidates is extremely effective and efficient and has gained the unqualified approval of the candidates as well as the assessors and administrators. This has proved extremely successful, especially with those candidates who are remote from the centre and those who work outwith normal academic hours.

Specific areas for improvement

No significant deficiencies were identified during the external verification process in this centre.