



**Higher National and Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2012
Brickwork**

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

Higher National Units

General comments

The outcome of external verification activity for academic year 2011–2012 again confirms that centres continue to have a well developed and concise understanding of the National Occupational Standards for Bricklaying and specifically the Higher National (HN) Units which form the Advanced Craft Brickwork qualification at SCQF 7.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The single centre verified for Higher National Brickwork Units had a clear understanding of the Unit specifications and their assessment instrument requirements. These findings are consistent with findings at centres in previous years and support the view that this aspect of HN delivery is being consistently addressed in an effective manner.

Evidence Requirements

As in previous years, centres continue to meet the Evidence Requirements of all Units. Candidate practical brickwork evidence was once again noted as being of a very high standard and there was sufficient evidence available for each Unit. Candidate knowledge evidence was also of a good standard.

Administration of assessments

Administration of the assessment process is again very effective, with internal verification being well planned. There is a focus on all Units to ensure ongoing support for assessors delivering the qualification for the first time.

Internal verification of Units has been undertaken rigorously in order to ensure that any issues likely to arise in this first delivery of the qualification are identified and addressed.

General feedback

Feedback from candidates interviewed confirmed that supportive and focused feedback from the assessor continues to be an effective means of developing candidate skills and knowledge. Candidate interviews confirmed that access to assessment opportunities was well managed with additional learner needs being addressed effectively.

Areas of good practice

The quality of the candidate practical brickwork skills at Professional Development Award (PDA) Advanced Craft level remains exceptionally good given that the centre verified is delivering the Course with low candidate numbers.

The support and developmental feedback given to candidates throughout the qualification clearly helps to foster confidence when attempting difficult and intricate practical assessments.

Centres continue to commit resources to setting up the PDA Advanced Craft in Brickwork despite the fact that demands for expensive specialist brickwork materials and equipment can be prohibitive.

Specific areas for improvement

Centres should continue to review the allocation of marks for subjective knowledge assessments to reflect fully the requirements of the Unit marking guide.

SVQ awards

General comments

The outcome of external verification activity for academic year 2011–2012 again confirms that all centres continue to have a well established and detailed understanding of the National Occupational Standards for Bricklaying, and specifically the PDA Units which form the SVQ qualification at SCQF 6.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All centres had a clear understanding of the Unit specifications and their assessment instrument requirements. These findings are consistent with findings at centres in previous years and support the view that this aspect of SVQ delivery is being consistently addressed in an effective manner.

Evidence Requirements

As in previous years, all centres continue to meet the Evidence Requirements of all Units. Candidate practical brickwork evidence was once again noted as being of a very high standard and there was sufficient evidence available for each Unit. Candidate written evidence was also of a good standard.

Administration of assessments

All centres are fully compliant with the assessment strategy in terms of assessors and Internal Verifiers being occupationally competent, having a sound, in-depth knowledge of the National Occupational Standards, participating in relevant CPD, and holding appropriate assessor and Verifier qualifications

Work Evidence Reports were available for all candidates. Assessment records and materials, candidate documentation and portfolios were well organised and consistent. Dates and signatures were recorded for all candidates, ensuring an effective internal and external verification focus. The administration systems in place in the centres effectively support the delivery of the Award.

General feedback

Almost all centres have excellent specialist workshop accommodation and ample materials to ensure that all aspects of the qualification, the Units and the candidate numbers are catered for.

All the candidates were happy with the progress they were making and they also valued the feedback from the assessor, particularly in relation to their practical activities.

Areas of good practice

Almost all centre internal verification processes were excellent and were being applied robustly. Feedback to assessors on their assessment decisions and assessor performance was well defined with a developmental and supportive focus.

Once again this year, the methodical and structured feedback given to candidates, particularly in their practical work, was supportive, informative and appreciated by the candidates.

The standard and quality of the practical assessed work was again highlighted as being excellent in almost all centres verified.

More than a few centres received positive comments. Reports recorded good practice in relation to high quality resources being available to provide an excellent learning experience and the effective use of these resources to promote sustainability.

Specific areas for improvement

Once again, candidate generic Unit checklists were the focus of development points in a few centres with comments identifying the integration and recording of achievement of generic competencies as being ineffective.

Development points were again noted in relation to internal verification activity at a few centres with comments focusing on:

- ◆ Internal Verifiers' induction and CPD activities, whether staff are college staff or seconded staff.
- ◆ Limited focus on verifying assessor performance.

Again this year, a few centres had development points noted in relation to candidate access to good quality clay bricks for candidate use. This reflects current industry requirements with a move away from an over-reliance on sand lime bricks.

In more than a few centres, development points highlighted that candidates should receive feedback on gaps in their knowledge and understanding. These gaps were apparent from subjective assessment question responses.

One centre received development points in relation to not using current training and assessment programmes (TAPs).