



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

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 following Units were verified across five centres:

DN5V 34 Colouring, Colour Correction and Innovative Design

DN5W 34 Creative Designs in Haircutting

DN5Y 33 Long Hair Design

All centres visited have a clear understanding of the Units being delivered and are fully aware of the requirements of the national standards. Assessment material and assessors' decisions on the Units verified are of a good standard and meet the requirements of the national standards. For Units being delivered, centres were using assessment exemplars developed by SQA for delivery and assessment purposes. Where there were no SQA assessment packs available, a number of centres had developed and submitted their material for prior verification. Where this had not been carried out, centres had interpreted the Evidence Requirements accurately.

The standards across the centres in most cases would appear to be appropriate and consistent with HN level.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Within the verification sample it would appear that centres are using the SQA assessment exemplars where available. Where these were not available, centre-devised material was of a standard which meets the requirements of the Unit specification and assessment evidence

Most of the centres had delivered the HN Units for some time and demonstrated a high level of familiarity with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment, Evidence Requirements and exemplification of materials used. Standardisation of assessments carried out was in place, and ensured a consistent approach was being carried out over most centres selected for verification visits.

The only comment made was that due to regionalisation of colleges and the amalgamation of a number of centres, some standardisation issues were identified. These issues occurred where each centre had developed its own centre assessment material. These issues have now been addressed and advice and guidance is now in place to achieve consistency and standardisation of assessment material across the amalgamated centres.

Where centres were delivering the Units for the first time, advice was given to ensure consistency of assessments

Evidence Requirements

All centres demonstrated a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements of the Units verified. All evidence presented was accessible and easy to track. This was relating to both written and Performance Evidence.

Centres who were delivering for the first time requested and received development visits to give them a better understanding of the level of the Evidence Requirements for the Units/Awards being delivered. This ensured a clear understanding of the Units/Awards.

Centres are using a number of innovative approaches to show Performance Evidence, digital portfolios and photographic evidence. These are good approaches to assessment which match industry requirements. The portfolios could be used after completion of the Award as a vehicle to showcase skills for employment within the hairdressing industry.

Administration of assessments

Most centres' assessments were being carried out and marked at an appropriate level. Assessment schedules were in place and all candidates were well aware of assessment timings and needs. Standardisation was achieved by robust internal verification processes. This was well documented and shown through external verification reports. Where any issues were raised, this was due to colleges that had been recently regionalised and where a standard approach was being rationalised and in the process of being implemented

Assessments used in HNC Hairdressing are assessed, in the main, by portfolios of candidate work. These mostly comprise research; design plans, client consultation records and photographic evidence. In a number of centres, the candidates were very innovative in their approach when producing evidence.

Internal verification in most centres is robust, well documented and easy to track. Any actions identified are fed back to the assessors and resolved within a given timescale.

Where support and advice were needed, this was addressed through feedback to assessors and Internal Verifiers, and actions put in place.

General feedback

Within the verification sample, it was shown that feedback to candidates was helpful and supportive. This was well documented within the Unit feedback records across all Units delivered. Candidates interviewed were enthusiastic about their Courses. They felt that good support was available from their tutors and seemed to be very aware of the assessment process. One group of candidates interviewed did report that they were required to produce a high number of photographs and that this was expensive.

Most centres have developed induction packs for candidates which outline all requirements of the assessment process, the support in place, and the delivery of

the Units and Awards. Some centres have online virtual learning environment (VLE) teaching notes in the form of Moodle, Mahara, etc. This was discussed with staff and candidates as proving to be an excellent format, ensuring that candidates did not miss any learning opportunities. Some centres have blog sites to give candidates the opportunity to discuss any areas they are unsure about and further link to their tutor if required.

Areas of good practice

Within the sample verified, a number of areas of good practice were identified. This evidence consisted of:

- ◆ Integration of Units in some centres — this made some of the areas more relevant to candidates especially where reports required for the Communication Practical Skills Unit assessment were also used as written evidence for the Hairdressing: Colouring, Colour Correction and Innovative Design Unit or the Hairdressing: Creative Designs in Haircutting Unit.
- ◆ Innovative portfolio content — evidence was well laid out within the portfolio showing evidence in a way that made sense to the candidates and gave a clear track of the requirements of the Units verified.
- ◆ Good photographic evidence — this appeared in most Units verified and shows excellent visual evidence, a significant part of the assessed material.
- ◆ Good links with industry — this ensures candidates have a good understanding of the requirements needed for employment.
- ◆ Strong evidence of good learning support for candidates.
- ◆ Candidates taking part in competitions, both in-house and at regional level, giving them an opportunity to showcase skills and broaden their experience.
- ◆ Practical experience in commercial salons where candidates have the opportunity to improve technical skills and gain a sense of a real work situation.
- ◆ Use of a VLE in a number of centres for both delivery and assessment purposes, including electronic portfolio evidence.
- ◆ Peer-group presentation, giving candidates the opportunity to get feedback from both fellow candidates and assessors.
- ◆ Internal verification systems which are easy to track and ensure good feedback to assessors.
- ◆ International links where centres had video link and student-to-student contact, offering potential employment.
- ◆ Inclusion of industry courses, giving candidates certificates to add to their portfolio.
- ◆ Group visits to Salon International to help broaden experience of the hairdressing industry.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Standardisation of assessment material over centres where there are two or more sites delivering the same Units.

- ◆ Need to ensure candidates have a better understanding of evaluative writing when evaluating performance.
- ◆ Integration of assessments.
- ◆ Need to ensure that all assessors give significant feedback from assessments carried out in most centres.
- ◆ Need to expand information for assessment purposes within written evidence.

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

F5DM 34: Hairdressing

The Graded Unit was verified across five centres.

General comments

All centres visited have a clear understanding of the Graded Unit being delivered and are fully aware of the requirements of the national standards. Assessment material and assessors' decisions on the Graded Unit verified are of a good standard and meet the requirements of the national standards. Centres were using assessment exemplars developed by SQA for delivery and assessment purposes.

Portfolio evidence was innovative in most cases and showed how the candidates had used skills learned from the HNC Hairdressing Award to showcase their Performance Evidence.

The standards across the centres in most cases would appear to be appropriate and consistent with HN level.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Within the verification sample it would appear that centres are using the SQA assessment exemplars.

Most of the centres had delivered the HN Graded Unit for some time and demonstrated a high level of familiarity with the Unit specification, instruments of assessment, Evidence Requirements and exemplification of materials. Standardisation of assessments carried out was in place in most centres and ensured a consistent approach was being carried out over most centres.

The only comment made was that in centres where the Graded Unit was being delivered over more than one site, it would be beneficial if cross-site marking of assessments could be standardised to ensure consistency of marking.

Evidence Requirements

All centres demonstrated a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements of the Graded Unit. All evidence presented was accessible and easy to track. This was across both written and Performance Evidence in the portfolios.

Centres which were delivering for the first time had requested and received development visits to give them a better understanding of the level of the Evidence Requirements for the Graded Unit being delivered. This has ensured they have a clear understanding of the requirements for delivery and assessment

Centres are using a number of innovative approaches in their portfolio evidence. Digital portfolios were being introduced, but in most centres photographic evidence used was of a good standard. Also, although there is no requirement for professional photographers to be used, a number of centres had involved photography students to carry out this task. The portfolios could be used after the completion of the Award as a good vehicle to showcase skills for employment within the hairdressing industry.

Administration of assessments

Most centre assessments were being carried out and marked at an appropriate level. Most centres had double marked the portfolio evidence of the Graded Unit to ensure a consistent approach to the assessment decisions. Assessment schedules were in place and all candidates were well aware of assessment timings and needs.

Information on the requirements for the Graded Unit is given out early within the delivery of the Award. It gives candidates the opportunity to research the requirements of the Unit. The exemplar for the Graded Unit contains a brief which is given to the candidates containing the Evidence Requirements to be included in their portfolios. In a number of centres, this had been further expanded to meet individual candidate needs. Evidence was in place in most centres to ensure that candidates were given supportive feedback at each stage of the assessment process, the planning, and the development. This was recorded on the assessor feedback records as these stages must be assessed and passed to allow progression through the Unit. Grading of the Unit, in most cases, met the requirements, and when marks were deemed to be too high this was discussed and advice given. Standardisation was achieved by robust, internal verification and this was well documented in external verification reports.

Where any issues were raised, this was due to colleges that had been recently regionalised, and where a standard approach was being rationalised and in the process of being implemented. In centres where the Award was being delivered over more than one site, support and advice were given to ensure a standardised approach would be used.

Assessments used in the HNC Hairdressing Graded Unit are assessed by portfolios of candidate work. This evidence consists of written evidence on planning, development and evaluation, and photographic evidence to cover the

assessment requirements. In a number of centres the candidates were very innovative in their approach when producing this evidence.

Internal verification in most centres is robust, well documented and easy to track. Any actions identified are fed back to the assessors and resolved within a given timescale.

Evidence was available in most centres that internal verification was taking place throughout the delivery of the Graded Unit. This was taking place once after Stage 1 planning, once after Stage 2 development, and again after the final evaluation stage. This system ensures that any problems are picked up and corrected early on in Unit delivery rather than at the end of Unit delivery where it may be difficult to resolve long-standing problems.

Where support and advice were needed, this was addressed through feedback to assessors and Internal Verifiers and actions put in place.

General feedback

Within the verification sample it was shown that feedback to candidates was helpful and supportive and this was well documented within the Unit feedback records. Candidates interviewed were enthusiastic about their Courses. They felt that good support was available from their tutors and seemed to be very aware of the assessment process. One group of candidates interviewed did report that they were required to produce a high number of photographs and that this was expensive.

Most centres have developed induction packs for candidates which outline all requirements of the assessment process. Good support was in place, along with evidence of good outlines for the delivery and assessment processes. Some centres have online VLE teaching notes in the form of Moodle, Mahara, etc. This was discussed with staff and candidates as proving to be an excellent format, ensuring that candidates did not miss any learning opportunities. Some centres have blog sites to give candidates opportunities to discuss any areas they are unsure about and further link to their tutor if required.

Areas of good practice

Within the sample verified, a number of areas of good practice were identified. This evidence consisted of:

- ◆ Innovative portfolio content — evidence was well laid out within portfolios showing evidence of candidate performance and giving a clear track of the requirements for planning, development and evaluation.
- ◆ Good photographic evidence in portfolios which is a significant part of the assessed material.
- ◆ Good links with industry to ensure candidates have a good understanding of the requirements needed for employment.
- ◆ Strong evidence of good learning support for candidates.

- ◆ Candidates taking part in competitions, both in-house and at regional level, giving them an opportunity to showcase skills and also broaden their experience.
- ◆ Practical experience in commercial salons where candidates have the opportunity to improve technical skills and gain a sense of a real work situation.
- ◆ Use of a VLE in a number of centres for both delivery and assessment purposes, including electronic portfolio evidence.
- ◆ Internal verification systems which are easy to track and ensure good feedback to assessors.
- ◆ International links where centres had video link and student-to-student contact, offering potential for employment opportunities.
- ◆ Inclusion of industry courses giving candidates certificates to add to their portfolio.
- ◆ Group visits to Salon International to help broaden experience of the hairdressing industry.
- ◆ Availability of continuous professional development (CPD) records to show staff qualifications and ongoing CPD (not a requirement for HN).

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Standardisation of assessment material over centres where delivery of the Award is over more than one site.
- ◆ Need to ensure candidates have a better understanding of evaluative writing when evaluating performance as part of the assessment evidence.
- ◆ Need to ensure that all assessors give significant feedback to support candidates (carried out in most centres).
- ◆ Need to ensure candidates are aware and are guided towards passing each area, and undertaking planning and development before moving on with the Graded Unit portfolio.
- ◆ Marking guides should clearly show how the Grade was achieved.

SVQ Awards

The following Awards were verified over 21 centres:

G9EC 21: Hairdressing and Barbering

G9EG 22: Barbering

G9EY 22: Hairdressing

G9FI 23: Hairdressing

General comments

Centres delivering are made up of three types: colleges, private training providers and commercial salons. Most centres visited have a clear understanding of the Awards being delivered and are fully aware of the requirements of the national standards. Assessment material, both mandatory and non-mandatory evidence, and assessors' decisions on all Units sampled were of a good standard and met the requirements of the national standards. Centres were using mandatory question papers developed by SQA and approved by the Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Association (HABIA) for delivery and assessment purposes. A couple of centres were using the online SQA SOLAR mandatory question papers developed earlier this year. Comments on these were very favourable.

Portfolios of evidence were available in all centres and were being used to meet the requirements of the national standards. From this year, centres have the opportunity to use the SQA-developed electronic portfolios. Advice and guidance was given by all External Verifiers on this new development.

The standards across the centres in most cases would appear to be appropriate and consistent with SVQ levels 1, 2 and 3.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Within the verification sample it would appear that centres are using the SQA-developed portfolios and mandatory questions.

Most of the centres had delivered the SVQs for some time and demonstrated a high level of familiarity with the Unit and Award requirements, instruments of assessments, Evidence Requirements and exemplification of materials used. Standardisation of assessment decisions and delivery was carried out in most centres and ensured a consistent approach across centres. Centres have developed material to cover the non-mandatory areas of each Unit in the Award.

Earlier this year, SQA developed online material which covers the non-mandatory aspects of the Awards. This should prove beneficial to any new centre wishing to deliver SVQs but also help centres who wish to access the online process.

Evidence Requirements

All centres demonstrated a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements of the SVQ Units and Awards, and all evidence presented was accessible and easy to track. This was demonstrated across both written and Performance Evidence in the portfolios. Within the portfolio, evidence keys indicate what evidence is covering the Performance Criteria. This system has proven to be difficult in the past, but advice given on external verification visits has overcome this, and in most centres the evidence keys are being used effectively. Indexing of portfolio evidence is, in most centres, easy to track, and where this proves to be unclear, advice and support has been provided by the External Verifier.

Centres are using a number of innovative approaches in the completion of portfolio assessment evidence. Digital portfolios were being introduced by a couple of centres. Where electronic evidence had been used, a member of staff was available on the external verification visit to ensure that the navigation of this was clear.

All centres have a copy of the HABIA assessment strategy showing clearly the needs for delivery and assessment of candidates' work. Requirements for assessors and Internal Verifiers regarding qualifications and CPD required in their role were recorded. Evidence of this was available in all centres. Where the requirements for CPD were not clear, this was discussed and actions/advice put in place to rectify this.

Administration of assessments

Most centre assessments were being carried out and marked at an appropriate level. Assessment schedules were in place and all candidates were well aware of assessment timing and the needs of all the Evidence Requirements.

Standardisation was achieved by robust internal verification. This was well documented in most centres as shown through external verification reports.

Assessments used in SVQs are assessed by portfolios of candidate evidence demonstrating performance and knowledge. Practical assessments are carried out on an ongoing basis. Mandatory questions are usually carried out when the theory has been delivered and most centres weight these questions to make the marking of assessment easier. The new online mandatory papers will be marked online. This should help centres to reduce time spent on paperwork and ensure standardisation of mandatory questions throughout the sector.

Internal verification in most centres is robust, well documented and easy to track. Any actions identified are fed back to the assessors and resolved within a given timescale.

Where support and advice were needed, this was addressed through feedback to assessors and Internal Verifiers, and actions put in place.

General feedback

Within the verification sample it was shown that feedback to candidates was helpful and supportive, and this was well documented within the Unit feedback records. Candidates in each type of delivering centre interviewed were enthusiastic about their Courses. They felt that good support was available from their tutors/assessors and seemed to be very aware of the assessment process.

Most centres have developed induction packs for candidates which outline all requirements of the assessment process. Good support was in place and evidence of good outlines for the delivery and assessment processes was in place. Candidates in most centres have an assessment planner/schedule which outlines assessment dates and requirements. A number of centres have online VLE teaching notes in the form of Moodle, Mahara, etc. This was discussed with staff and candidates as proving to be an excellent format, ensuring that candidates did not miss any learning opportunities. Some centres have blog sites to give candidates the opportunity to discuss any areas they are unsure about and further link to their tutor or peer group if required.

There was still confusion in some centres around the Evidence Requirements for the level 3 Unit: Monitor Procedures to Safely Control Work Operations. Advice on the types of evidence needed to meet the Evidence Requirements has been given to all centres.

Areas of good practice

Within the sample verified, a number of areas of good practice were identified. This evidence consisted of:

- ◆ Portfolio content — evidence was well laid out within the assessment portfolio showing evidence of candidate performance and giving a clear track of the requirements of planning, development and evaluation. In some centres colour coding was being used to clearly show where evidence could be found.
- ◆ Good photographic evidence in portfolios at level 3 giving visual evidence to support assessment decisions
- ◆ Good links with industry — this ensure candidates have a good understanding of the requirements needed for employment.
- ◆ Strong evidence of good learning support for candidates.
- ◆ Candidates take part in competitions, both in-house and at regional level, giving them an opportunity to showcase skills and also broaden their experience.
- ◆ Practical experience in commercial salons where candidates have the opportunity to improve technical skills and gain a sense of a real work situation.
- ◆ College candidates take part in work placements in local salons.
- ◆ Where the Awards are being delivered within a commercial salon where the candidate is employed, evidence was in place to show innovative assessment opportunities.

- ◆ Use of VLE for both delivery and assessment purposes, including electronic portfolio evidence.
- ◆ Internal verification systems which are easy to track and ensure good feedback to assessors.
- ◆ International links where centres had video link and student-to-student contact, offering potential employment opportunities.
- ◆ Inclusion of industry courses giving candidates certificates to add to their portfolio.
- ◆ Group visits to Salon International to help broaden experience of the hairdressing industry
- ◆ Peer-to-peer demonstrations comprised of students from a range of ethnic backgrounds in order to show examples of different hair techniques.
- ◆ Memory sticks provided to candidates to assist with storage of photographic evidence.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Ensure that all assessors give detailed feedback to ensure support is in place for candidates (carried out in most centres).
- ◆ Ensure all assessment material is signed off when complete.
- ◆ For level 3 Unit 'Monitor Procedures to Safely Control Work Operations', ensure candidates meet all requirements of the Unit assessment specification.
- ◆ Ensure centres are using the original mandatory papers and no changes are put in place.
- ◆ Ensure evidence used through client record cards meets the requirements of the Performance Evidence for the portfolio.
- ◆ Internal verification should be ongoing throughout the delivery of the Award to ensure consistency across assessors' decisions. This is particularly important where a number of assessors and sites are being used for delivery of the Award.
- ◆ CPD should be recorded to satisfy the requirements of the assessment strategy.
- ◆ Ensure clear indexing of evidence in portfolios.