



**National Qualifications 2012  
Internal Assessment Report  
Practical Craft Skills**

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

# National Courses

Titles/levels of National Courses verified:

X035 Woodworking Skills	(Intermediate 1 and 2)
X034 Engineering Craft Skills	(Intermediate 1 and 2)

## General comments

This year 124 external verification exercises were carried out. Of these, 122 were accepted. The two centres that were put on hold were accepted after further external verification visits.

These figures suggest that the vast majority of centres have a clear understanding of the National Standards required for assessment at Intermediate 1 and 2 Woodworking Skills and Engineering Craft Skills. Over the years, the percentage of centres where internal assessment was found to be accepted has improved. Once again, this year the number of revisits has decreased.

As in previous years, the requirement for robust and reliable internal verification procedures within centres was emphasised by all visiting External Verifiers. Centres have given consideration to this and are responding to this requirement; however, there is still room for improvement in a number of centres. This has been highlighted in external verification reports and feedback has been provided to centres.

The following information is included for clarification and was covered at the recent Understanding Standards event held in March 2012.

- ◆ The Intermediate 1 and 2 Woodworking Skills and Engineering Craft Skills Courses all consist of three Units and a Course project.
- ◆ **It is mandatory that all the Units and the Course project are completed before a Course award can be made.**
- ◆ To achieve an award at Intermediate 2 level, all the Units must be completed successfully at Intermediate 2 level.

Listed below are examples of areas which could lead to a 'not accepted' decision during an external verification visit:

- ◆ insufficient evidence
- ◆ no evidence for specific Outcomes
- ◆ assessment not reliable
- ◆ inconsistent marking/judgement
- ◆ more than 1/3 disagreement in the verification sample
- ◆ instrument of assessment not reliable or valid
- ◆ no internal verification
- ◆ candidates presented at wrong level

## **Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials**

The vast majority of assessors are very familiar with the Course Arrangements documents, and are clear on the Unit content. They are competent in the use of appropriate instruments of assessment to assess the prescribed learning Outcomes.

Most centres are using exemplar materials and NABs issued by SQA, thus ensuring consistency across the country. Although the clock project is still used by the majority of centres at both Intermediate 1 and 2 for assessing *Woodworking Skills*, there has been an increase in centres using alternative models. This move towards alternative models is more obvious in *Engineering Craft Skills*, where, although the majority of centres still use the bicycle clamp project, a number of centres are using the weather vane, fly-tying vice projects and the new vice project.

Where a centre has been using an instrument of assessment of their own design, it is strongly recommended that it is prior verified by SQA to ensure it is consistent with exemplification materials. Details of how to arrange for prior verification can be found on the [Practical Craft Skills](#) area of SQA's website. Centres are reminded to ensure any alterations they make to instruments of assessment do not make them invalid, ie do not reduce widths to an extent that they can no longer allow assessment of tolerances, etc.

If centres wish to change the instrument of assessment being used, they should refer to the [secure area](#) of SQA's website, where a number of projects are available.

### **Evidence Requirements**

Most centres have a clear understanding of the retention of evidence and Evidence Requirements. As highlighted in previous years, centres are reminded that evidence retention is governed by the Unit completion dates.

The individual centre should submit completion dates for all Units to SQA.

**All evidence for each Unit must be retained for three weeks after the submitted completion date.**

The vast majority of issues with Unit verification lie with the centre failing to retain evidence.

There are no major issues with the retention of evidence for the Course project.

### **Administration of assessments**

All centres work from the Grade Descriptors issued by SQA. These are available from the secure area of SQA's website. This ensures consistency and allows all centres to assess work, at the appropriate level, considering processes undertaken, tolerances applied, and quality of finish.

Although there has been improvement in the quality and reliability of internal verification procedures within a number of centres, this is not universal and there are a number of centres that should formalise their procedures to ensure that reliable, robust evidence of internal verification is available to an External Verifier.

Although cross marking and collaborative marking form part of good quality assurance, they do not on their own constitute internal verification. The policy for internal verification should reflect the exercise as carried out by the visiting External Verifier and **records of this exercise must be kept**.

## **Areas of good practice**

As commented on in previous Internal Assessment Reports, the quality of candidates' work has improved year after year. This is regularly highlighted in External Verifiers' reports.

Many centres are now issuing individual student logbooks/handbooks which outline the specific requirements of all aspects of the Course, Units and Course project. These booklets specify the Outcomes and expectations within the Course, while encouraging self, peer and teacher assessment. In some centres this also incorporates target setting involving student, teacher and parent/guardian.

The vast majority of centres have considered the need to generate evidence for all areas of individual students' input and design. This is reflected in External Verifiers' reports.

Good internal verification procedures involve a clear policy statement, sampling and feedback along with detailed records being retained (policy into practice). The internal verification procedures should reflect the process carried out by visiting External Verifiers.

In many cases, Course summary assessment sheets are being extended to give more detail on individual candidates, with reasons for the grades awarded. This assists greatly during external verification.

One centre demonstrated high-quality work across all aspects and in particular the quality of finish.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

There is a need for some centres to improve on their internal verification policy and to ensure a robust system is in place. Centres should be aware that if there is no internal verification then the result of future verification visits will be 'not accepted'.

Where centres are not adhering to the completion dates submitted to SQA, this can result in problems with the retention of evidence which will affect the external verification exercise. Centres **must** ensure that any Unit completion dates submitted to SQA correspond with actual Unit delivery dates.

In a few of the centres visited there was an issue with discrepancies between working drawings and the actual finished project. Any alterations to overall dimensions or dimensions of materials used in the construction of artefacts must be reflected in all working drawings. Centres are reminded that widths of materials should not be reduced, as this compromises the effectiveness of the project as an appropriate instrument of assessment for joint gap tolerances, etc.

When welding, centres are reminded to ensure continuous runs, not tacking. Centres are advised to ensure that care is taken when setting up for welding to ensure square.

Centres are recommended not to undertake processes they are poorly equipped to deliver.

Centres are reminded that the difference between a good grade and a very good grade is liable to be down to the finish. Finish is an area where there is still some scope for improvement. There is still evidence of pencil lines, poor finish to end-grain, and lack of de-burring, rounded edges and poor filing.

Should a centre feel unsure of any aspects of the Course and require further support, they can contact SQA to discuss this further, and if appropriate, to arrange a development visit.

# National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified:

D182 Bench Skills 1 — Wood Flat Frame Construction (Intermediate 1 and 2)

D183 Bench Skills 2 — Wood Carcase Construction (Intermediate 1 and 2)

D184 Machining and Finishing — Wood (Intermediate 1 and 2)

D180 Fabrication and Thermal Joining Techniques (Intermediate 1 and 2)

D179 Machine Processes — Metal (Intermediate 1 and 2)

D178 Bench Skills — Metal (Intermediate 1 and 2)

## General comments

As reported last year, the majority of presenting centres have a clear understanding of the National Standards required for assessment for the Units contributing to Intermediate 1 and 2 Woodworking Skills and Engineering Craft Skills Courses.

Centres, in the main, are adhering very closely to the guidelines and criteria issued by SQA to ensure consistency when assessing Unit work.

There is still an issue with the retention of Unit evidence in some centres. It should be clear that **all** evidence must be retained for three weeks after the completion date submitted to SQA, unless otherwise advised by SQA.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The majority of assessors are very familiar with the Unit specifications, are clear on Unit content, and are competent in the use of appropriate instruments of assessment to assess prescribed learning Outcomes.

The majority of centres are using exemplar materials and NABs issued by SQA, thus ensuring consistency across the country.

Where a centre has been using an instrument of assessment of their own design, it is strongly recommended that that it is prior verified by SQA to ensure it is consistent with exemplification materials. Details of how to arrange for prior verification can be found on the [Practical Craft Skills](#) area of SQA's website.

When submitting work for prior verification, centres are reminded to refer to existing NABs for guidance on material cross-section to ensure that the proposed artefacts are appropriate for purpose and they are a reliable instrument of assessment.

## **Evidence Requirements**

As in previous years, most centres have a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements and the retention of evidence policy. However, a few centres still seem unclear. Centres are reminded that evidence retention is governed by the Unit completion dates.

The vast majority of issues with Unit verification lie with the centre failing to retain evidence.

The individual centre should submit completion dates for all Units to SQA.

**All evidence for each Unit must be retained for three weeks after the submitted completion date.**

The evidence retained must include evidence for all learning Outcomes along with records, and the instrument of assessment must be provided for each Unit.

## **Administration of assessments**

All centres work from the Grade Descriptors issued by SQA. This ensures consistency and allows everyone to assess work at the appropriate level, with regards to processes undertaken, tolerances applied and quality of finish.

Many centres have good internal verification procedures in place, which are consistent and available for scrutiny. This is not universal and a number of centres should formalise their procedures to ensure reliable, robust evidence of internal verification is available.

There has been a definite improvement in the quality and quantity of evidence available to assist the external verification process.

Although cross marking and collaborative marking form part of good quality assurance, they do not on their own constitute internal verification. The policy for internal verification should reflect the exercise as carried out by the visiting External Verifier and **records of this exercise must be kept.**

## **Areas of good practice**

As with the work on Course projects, the quality of candidates' work at Unit level continues to improve.

The quality of record keeping and individual candidates' profiles continues to improve, and staff in centres that have developed this are commended. Centres that have not developed these areas are reminded that this should now be considered.

Good internal verification procedures are evident in some centres. While this is an ongoing development in some centres, the importance of reliable and robust internal verification cannot be underestimated.

Some centres are supplying evidence of practice materials, particularly in welding, which is useful for the verification exercise.

Specific attention has been drawn to the good use of jigs within centres and some excellent use of lathes, both in *Engineering* and *Woodworking*.

The quality of finish is improving, but there is room for further improvement in this area.

### **Specific areas for improvement**

As previously highlighted, there is a need for some centres to improve their internal verification procedures.

Departments delivering the Courses must ensure that they are following their internal process for articulating completion dates and that these are the dates being submitted to SQA. This action will help to eliminate the issue of evidence retention required for external verification visits.

A logical spread of completion dates may assist in the problem of storage of evidence.

Most centres use the written tests supplied in NAB exemplars which have cut-off scores for different levels. If, however, a centre has developed its own test, cut-off scores must be made available.

Centres are reminded that it is the responsibility of the individual centres to ensure that they can provide evidence for all learning Outcomes for each of the Units.

Welding still lacks consistency across centres and this tends to reflect the time spent practising the skill.

Centres are reminded that they should refrain from applying paint finishes prior to verification.