



**National Qualifications Internal Assessment
Report 2012
Personal Social Development**

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:

- ◆ Personal Development Courses: C255 10, C255 11, C255 12
- ◆ Leadership Award: G9D3 45, G9D4 46

General comments

The verification team continue to see a significant increase in approvals, development visits and verification activity which supports the view that centres are keen to deliver Personal Development Courses.

A range of good practice was highlighted in External Verification (EV) reports which included: a wide range of project activities, subject knowledge and expertise; teacher guides explaining the content of the Course; and teaching and learning approaches including cross-curricular assessment checks.

External Verifiers made a point of meeting with candidates to obtain their views. It is clear from candidate responses that they value the opportunity to undertake Personal Development Courses. Furthermore there is a mutual benefit gained from carrying out project activities which in turn establishes a positive community ethos within centres and mutual respect between candidates and their assessor(s).

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

Assessors are familiar with the Course and Award arrangements, Unit specifications, Instruments of Assessment and exemplification materials. This was clearly evidenced throughout external visiting verification activity in 2011/12 which highlighted significant levels of good practice and a sound application of the national standard.

Evidence Requirements

Some centres attempted to integrate Course evidence but this did not successfully provide the necessary tracking and full coverage of the Evidence Requirements. Centres must ensure that all of the Evidence Requirements for each of the Units covered by the integrated assessment have been met.

Administration of assessments

A number of centres still need to develop internal verification policy and procedures whilst other centres are more advanced. External Verifiers continue to refer assessors to SQA's Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres publication. However, the majority of centres do have formal records of internal verification assessment decisions, sampling and standardisation arrangements. There was good evidence of shared practice and networking within local areas.

External verification activity revealed assessments are at the appropriate level but assessors still need to be made aware of the need to differentiate between the levels based on five main principles:

- ◆ amount of support learners receive
- ◆ level of participation by learners
- ◆ level of understanding of learners
- ◆ complexity of tasks given to learners
- ◆ level of maturity displayed by learners

Assessment was mainly project or folio based. Short-answer questions were commonly used as well as extended response questions. Self-evaluation tools, eg SWOT analysis and a range of interactive ICT learning tools such as personality questionnaires and learning styles were commonly used. Investigative and research methods proved popular with candidates as well as planned practical activities and events, eg fundraising, fair trade events, outward bound activities and work placements.

Areas of good practice

External Verifiers reported the following:

- ◆ The internal assessment arrangements observed during external visiting verification were very comprehensive and well organised.
- ◆ The overall presentation of assessment materials, candidate folios and internal verification documentation was exemplary and reflected the high degree of preparation prior to external verification visits.
- ◆ The projects tackled were wide ranging and usually involved several events, eg the compilation of a cookbook, fundraising and a dance show. This approach helps to develop and reinforce the personal, social and vocational skills required for future success, eg self-awareness, task management, communication and interpersonal skills, and practical abilities.
- ◆ Candidates showed a willingness to discuss their experiences, future interests and career aspirations during external verification visits.
- ◆ It was evident that many centres adopted a team approach involving a range of teaching staff from across the curriculum. Assessment and verification was very effective and regular monitoring promoted equality throughout the delivery of the national Courses.
- ◆ The breadth of experiences available to candidates, eg the ability to work closely and to interact with teaching staff whilst undertaking a range of community projects such as environmental projects, breakfast clubs, global fundraising and outward bound activities.
- ◆ The delivery of Personal Development Units proved very effective due to the initial training and range of resource materials available to support the delivery of the programmes.

- ◆ The diverse nature of the project work undertaken and the 'whole centre ethos' approach and commitment to activities such as Friday Night Projects, Karaoke, and Christmas Children's Toy appeal.
- ◆ It was evident that candidates at Higher level were working independently with clear use made of internet-based exercises and research.

Specific areas for improvement

Centres should consider the following:

- ◆ PSD involves 'assessing the process' and not the end result which may or may not have been successful. This means that the candidate may not have been successful in carrying out the activity but may still be able to achieve the Unit provided the Evidence Requirements have been met.
- ◆ Centre evidence was not always well documented in a written format and oral feedback often went unrecorded.
- ◆ The internal verification process needs to be clearly linked to the assessment process. This is particularly relevant to centres where the process is new and evolving.
- ◆ There is a clear need to identify the appropriate level of work in the early stages and to complete the corresponding assessment support material. This should not be carried out at the end of the Course when it is likely that the assessment material does not match the level of candidate responses.
- ◆ Whilst there was some evidence of standardisation taking place it is clear that internal verification procedures still require some strengthening, eg clear pro forma, records of meetings, and internal policy documentation. External verification activity enabled External Verifiers to signpost relevant SQA documentation to centres to support this development.

National Qualifications (NQ) Awards

Titles/levels of NQ Awards verified:

- ◆ Leadership Awards: G9D3 45, G9D3 46
- ◆ Employability Award:G9D2 43, G9CY 44

General comments

Refer to NQ Course/Unit comments for all sections.

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified:

- ◆ Preparing for Employment: First Steps F786 09
- ◆ Building Own Employability Skills F787 09
- ◆ Responsibilities of Employment F788 09
- ◆ Dealing with Work Situations F789 09
- ◆ Personal Development: Self Awareness: F2FV 09/10/11/12
- ◆ Personal Development: Self in Society: F37W 09/10/11/12
- ◆ Personal Development: Self and Work: F37X 09/10/11/12
- ◆ Personal Development: Practical Abilities: F37Y 09/10/12
- ◆ Work Experience: D36H 10
- ◆ Leadership in Practice: F78B 11/12
- ◆ Leadership: An Introduction: F78A 11/12

General comments

Centres have a very clear understanding of the Unit Evidence Requirements. This was exemplified in the high standard of candidate folio evidence and the highly challenging project activities carried out within centres which were commended as good practice throughout external verification reports.

Centres are very well organised for external verification visits. Internal verification systems and procedures are evolving and do support the standards of delivery. Where evidence is not being formally recorded, centres are being encouraged and supported to do this during visiting external verification. In some instances, this includes centres being encouraged to formalise their procedures and to develop an internal verification policy.

As there is a continued emphasis being placed on the need to provide formal records of the process, centres are encouraged to evidence internal standardisation. External Verifiers have provided development support to centres to explain how this should operate, eg sampling candidate folios across Outcomes, Units and the Course itself, standardising the assessment of Units, and providing records of standardisation meetings and actions taken.

Centres are encouraged to use the Understanding Standards website because it contains a variety of exemplification and support materials.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Verifiers consistently commented that assessors were not only familiar with the Unit specification requirements but continue to exemplify good practice.

There was consistent evidence that centres are well prepared with up-to-date learning and teaching materials, records of work, candidate workbooks/folios, and good evidence of practical project activities such as videos, photographs, displays, posters, diaries/logs. Internal verification procedures and records of internal verification activity are being made available to the external verifier.

External verification visits continue to contain a strong element of development in relation to supporting centres to develop system processes in assessment activities, integration of Evidence Requirements and internal verification. Assessors are generally very keen to discuss assessment instruments and exemplification.

Evidence Requirements

External verification sampling clearly indicates that centres do have a very clear and accurate understanding of the National Standards required in the delivery of Personal Social Development (PSD) Units. Assessors are familiar with the National Standard and the Unit Evidence Requirements and this is exemplified in the number of centres where good practice has been identified in a variety of subjects, eg Personal Development Units, Leadership Units, Work Experience Units and Employability Units.

Administration of assessments

SQA's Assessment Support Materials (ASPs) and National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials are by far the most commonly used assessment instruments. However, as centres are becoming familiar with SQA assessment and support materials they are beginning to submit their own assessment instruments for prior verification

Following the high priority placed on internal verification procedures during external verification activity in 2010/11, and the need to support centres to help them to develop more formal approaches, centres are responding positively. There was some very good evidence of well-established formal systems in place and a willingness of others to 'take on board' the need to provide an internal system which is robust and fit for purpose.

Areas of good practice

Centres adhered to the internal assessment Unit checklists and marking schemes provided by SQA. The standard of assessment evidence was highlighted in a number of instances as Good Practice as detailed below:

- ◆ Involvement with a range of external agencies, eg community development, local authorities and local organisations, various charities and fundraising organisations, design and graphic companies, and voluntary work.
- ◆ The effective use of group work when planning, implementing and evaluating project activities.

The following examples of good practice were observed:

- ◆ The range and variety of activities undertaken for the Leadership Award in a school was commendable, eg running a Halloween school disco, organising fundraising for a pilgrimage to Rome, and selling leaving jumpers. There was detailed concise NAB evidence to support individual Units. There was evidence that the internal verification policy had been fully implemented by staff involved in the delivery of the Group Award and this was further exemplified in candidate folio evidence.
- ◆ One centre has incorporated the assessment of Self in Society at SCQF level 4 into their RME programme in S5 thus promoting increased engagement in the curriculum.
- ◆ One centre provides excellent opportunities to undertake a wide variety of work placements in areas such as civil engineering, veterinary, wood store, car mechanics, childcare and nurseries. A very detailed letter provides comprehensive information to parents about the work placement. Candidates undertake a one-day health and safety certificate before they attend work experience.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ There is a clear need to document fully the internal verification process of Unit delivery and adherence to an internal policy which provides records of meetings, sampling, standardisation activities, and relevant CPD activities for staff.
- ◆ External verification of the the Leadership Awards and Units revealed the need for more consistent record keeping, monitoring of candidate progress, and analysis of tasks, roles, activities undertaken and conclusions reached.
- ◆ Centres are encouraged to expand the types of evidence to include visual, oral and recorded.
- ◆ The Practical Abilities Unit evidence utilised SQA assessment checklists but there is a need to further support this evidence with photographic, digital and other physical evidence.