



**National Qualifications 2012  
Internal Assessment Report**

**Skills for Work  
Engineering Skills**

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

# National Qualifications (NQ) Awards

Titles/levels of NQ Awards verified:

Skills for Work: Engineering Skills (Intermediate 1 and 2)

## General comments

Seven centres had been selected for a verification visit. Five centres were offering the Int 1 award, one was offering the Int 2 award, and one was not running Skills for Work Engineering Skills. Many of the centres were offering these awards for the first time. In all cases, staff had a clear and accurate understanding of the national standards gained from offering other SQA awards.

Where mentioned in the External Verifiers' (EV) reports, the vast majority of candidates were male and in most cases those undertaking the Int 1 qualification were from S3/S4. The centre offering the Int 2 qualification had selected candidates from S5/S6.

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

The EVs did not report any issues regarding the SQA documentation.

Centres are recommended to use the Skills for Work (SfW) support provision offered by Scotland's Colleges and/or SQA to clarify any issues that may arise with the documentation and/or materials.

SQA has set up an e-forum specifically for this qualification to share ideas and practice between participating centres. EVs advised all centres of the forum and encouraged active participation.

All centres visited had a successful visit.

## Evidence Requirements

All centres were using the SQA-produced National Assessment Bank materials for assessing candidates. These specify the Evidence Requirements. Centres were interpreting the requirements of the Evidence Requirements correctly.

Some centres have still to fully encompass the routine of candidates completing their evaluation for Employability Skills. EVs will require to reinforce this requirement next session.

EVs commented on the quality of candidate practical work being generally to a high standard. Most centres were also using the support materials from Scotland's Colleges to prepare candidates for both written and practical assessment.

## **Administration of assessments**

Most centres displayed robust internal verification procedures with only one centre requiring advice on maintaining closer links within the school/college partnership. A few centres had not formalised the recording of internal verification activity.

Most centres had adopted the correct award for the candidate group. The exception was the centre offering the Int 2 award. It struggled to complete the assessments, mainly due to staff absence. This centre had also the added problem of high class numbers and candidates who had not progressed from the lower level. The centre has a development plan in place to remedy this situation next session.

Some centres had questioned altering the SQA-produced NABs to suit local conditions. They were advised that this was achieved by them developing their own assessments, internally verifying the assessments and recording the changes and the reason(s) for them in their internal verification documentation. They were reminded that SQA offers prior verification of centre-developed assessment material to ensure that it complies with the Evidence Requirements in the Unit Specification.

## **Areas of good practice**

One centre had recently opened a business enterprise centre which brought together a number of courses (of which Engineering Skills was an important part) designed to assist candidates enter the job market. This centre had also highlighted the success of the Course in the local newspaper which raised the benefits of engineering throughout the school and the local community.

The assessor of the Int 1 Electrical/Electronic Unit in another centre had assumed the role of a training officer, simulating what candidates might meet in the future in industry. The assessor gave plenty of advice and encouragement to candidates on both their technical and employability skills.

Another centre made good use of video techniques during interview and employability skills training, and had excellent employer links.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

The main areas for improvement are:

- ◆ In some cases, centres produce evidence of internal verification activity but fail to record the activity. Internal verification procedures should be formalised.
- ◆ Centres are urged to allow staff to access Scotland's Colleges/ SQA Skills for Work support provision to enhance delivery and good practice.
- ◆ Centres should be encouraged to identify candidate ability in order to offer the correct level of Course for that ability.
- ◆ Centres must ensure that candidates fully complete their evaluation for employability skills.