



**National Qualifications 2014
Internal Assessment Report
Core Skills Information
Communication Technology (NQ)**

Verification Group Number: 341

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Date: 02/07/2014

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

Notes for report authors

This Internal Assessment Report will provide feedback to centres on visiting and central verification activity in relation to National Qualifications.

Our aim is to provide information for centres on the overall standard of assessment, specifically the assessment design, implementation and judgements made. The report should also cover any variation across centres, areas of good practice, and recommendations for areas that could be improved.

When preparing this report, please:

- ◆ write in plain English using the headings provided on the following pages
- ◆ ensure that your comments stand on their own within the overall context of the report, and are not just responses to the prompts
- ◆ be as specific as possible
- ◆ use objective language — base your comments on fact rather than assumption or opinion and indicate if the standard is improving or deteriorating
- ◆ back-up all comments with verification activity evidence — for example, provide an indication of what is causing a problem

Finally, remember to complete the Senior Verifier questionnaire at the end of this document. Your comments help us to improve our processes.

SQA's plain English policy

All written communication from SQA has to be written in plain English. It applies to publications, letters, e-mails, circulars, updates, and anything else we release in writing. We have this plain English policy because:

- ◆ it is the most efficient way of working — communicating clearly means there is less need for clarification later
- ◆ it will help us be transparent and open
- ◆ it is a way of avoiding discrimination
- ◆ it is good for public perceptions of the organisation

You can find detailed guidance on plain English in our style guide [Writing for SQA](#) (web search 'SQA plain English').

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified:

Information and Communication Technology F3GC 08

Information and Communication Technology F3GC 09

Information and Communication Technology F3GC 10

Information and Communication Technology F3GC 11

Information and Communication Technology F3GC 12

General comments

Most External Verifiers indicated, within their reports, that they were appreciative of those centres employing the integrative approach to the delivery of Core Skills units together with other core skills and sometimes other qualifications. This approach gives the Core Skills units a better standing in that they relate to the whole process and are not just unnecessary add-ons which have no relation to other qualifications.

The structure of the present Core Skills ICT unit specification was welcomed by most centres as it allowed a wide range of software/hardware to be used rather than the earlier versions which could only be completed using a very narrow range of software some of which were not used by the learners in their main award area.

It should be realised that it is not mandatory to use the ASPs for assessment purposes as instruments of assessments can be centre devised so long as they meet with the requirements of the unit specifications. I would however urge centres to use the checklists within the ASPs to ensure complete coverage of the range required by the Core Skill specification.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

A number of assessors and other staff had made the assumption that the ASPs were the unit specifications and were unaware that the unit specification was the main document for these units. It should be remembered that the ASPs are merely an example of one way of assessing the unit.

Many centres used the SQA published ASPs as the basis for assessment however it was pleasing to note that most centres had at least contextualised these to suit the learners' work/life experience.

Some centres had submitted their instruments of assessment to the SQA for prior verification to ensure they were complying with unit requirements.

Evidence Requirements

All of the centres selected for external verification this year had provided sufficient competent evidence which met with the requirements of the unit specifications. This had been assessed either by using the ASPs or contextualised versions of the ASPs and in some cases by centres generating their own assessment instruments.

Administration of assessments

All centres externally verified this year demonstrated that the administration of assessments was of a good standard.

In all cases evidence generated was at the correct level for the unit being undertaken.

In most cases it was obvious that learner's evidence had been closely scrutinised by assessors indicated by annotations/comments that had been added as feedback to learners.

In the majority of cases internal verification was robust and very good feedback had been given to assessors.

Areas of good practice

In some centres, where learners were attempting multiple core skills units, integration between units was being carried out. This leads to improved learner motivation by making the core skills activities as relevant as possible to the learners. This form of assessment is usually undertaken by the use of project type activities.

Specific areas for improvement

In a few centres that had a number of satellite sites spread over a wide area it was noticed that some assessment documentation and learning material was not standardised across the various sites. In these cases the internal verification system should strive to ensure standardisation of documentation across all sites. Where assessors (and in some cases Internal Verifiers) are spread over a large area, centres should ensure that all assessors are given the opportunity to meet together for at least one quality meeting each year. Some centres use video conferencing for this.