



Higher National Qualifications

NQ

And

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Internal Assessment Report

2008

Subject: Brickwork NQ, HN & SVQ Levels 1 - 3, Construction and Civil Engineering SVQ Levels 1 – 3 and Skills for Work Construction

Sector Panel or SSC: Construction Skills

Date: 27 July '08

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification which has taken place within National Qualifications, Higher National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

HIGHER NATIONAL UNITS

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

Include:

- *General comments*
- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

General comments:

Advanced Certificate in Brickwork (Moderation Group171)

This award continues to prove to be very challenging as it reflects the very highest of craft practical skills to be attained by candidates. There has been an improvement in recent years in the uptake of this award as there appears to be a realization that it has a role to play in the retention of high level skills within the industry and avoiding these traditional skills being lost to construction.

Although the external verification was limited to a sampling of participating centres there was evidence that the overall high standards continue to be maintained.

Once again, the time scales set for the completion of the various brickwork practical assessments are proving to be very challenging but this is intended to reflect the realities of the industry requirements and targets to be met by craftsmen/women.

The award continues to be highly respected in the sector. There were no “holds” on this award last session.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Evidence of good practice included: Candidates demonstrating excellent building skills, drawings and sketches were very good in many of those sampled and candidates demonstrating the correct attitudes towards their work and operating in a professional manner.

Areas for further development: Although a significant minority of candidates were not yet achieving the high industrial tolerances set for the award, the majority of the candidates were demonstrating their ability to achieve these standards.

This minority of candidates who are having difficulty in meeting the tolerances set, may benefit by additional training sessions being provided in the college, or alternatively by gaining further industrial experience in the workplace, prior to embarking on the award.

Sample answers for the subjective questions require to be developed in some centres in order to ensure standardization of assessment decisions.

In one centre the product evidence (construction of the herringbone panel) was not in full compliance with the drawing specification. Centres require to understand that any deviation from the existing drawing specs must be prior moderated by SQA

HIGHER NATIONAL GRADED UNITS

TITLES/LEVELS OF HN GRADED UNITS VERIFIED

Insert details below

N/A

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

Include:

- *General comment*
- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

General comments:

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

SVQ AWARDS

TITLES/LEVELS OF SVQ AWARDS VERIFIED

Insert details below

Brickwork SVQ - levels 2 & 3 and Construction and Civil Engineering Services – levels 2.

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

Include:

- *General comments*
- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

general comments:

The Brickwork SVQ continues to be proving a success in the Training and Assessment Programme (TAP) form of the course delivery. The course programme has been consolidated in the last session and most of the minor teething problems have been resolved. Overall feedback from candidates and staff is excellent and there is continued evidence that a high standard of work is being demonstrated during e.v. visits.

There were several “holds” in the award last session, but all of these have since been satisfactorily resolved by a combination of guidance and advice being offered by the external verifier, and the centre’s prompt actions and implementation of the advice.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Good Practice

- **Centres in general are making thorough preparations for external verification visits and are providing product and knowledge evidence in compliance with SQA guidelines and policies.**
- **Portfolio systems continue to improve and candidate’s assessment drawings and sketches have started to get better in many centres.**
- **Candidate assessment responses to the level three subjective questions in year two have been of a better standard and assessors and internal verifiers continue to work towards meeting the challenges of implementing the standardisation in assessing the level three knowledge evidence.**
- **Candidates continue to demonstrate the evidence for the generic units by their performances during external verification visits and assessors are gaining confidence in recording evidence for these units during the natural occurrences throughout the college year.**
- **Centres are ensuring that the Assessment Strategy Methodology is being complied with in regards to Health and Safety and PPE.**

Areas for further development

- **Holistic methods of assessment require to be adopted for the assessment of the generic units. The new checklists and guidance which will be available for next session should support this development.**
- **A few centres require to give an internal verification focus to the assessment evidence required for the drawing and sketched answers at the level 3 stage of the award.**
- **There were a few examples where centres were using industrial practices which did not comply with the Building Standards (e.g. Lintels not having the minimum “rest” in relation to their span).**
- **A few centres were not meeting the Assessment Strategy Methodology guidelines in regards to candidates having “materials that are used for real life construction” (e.g. clay facing brick and special brick were required at one centre).**
- **Numeracy questions must always show candidates “working out” as instructed on the TAP assessment question sheets**
- **If candidates are generating evidence at more than one centre location a visit may be required to these satellite locations**
- **Some of the solutions being accepted for the bonding problems are inappropriate at the level 3 stage of the SVQ award**
- **There was evidence that some candidates require further development in their drawing and sketching skills and also to improve their understanding of the principles of building science.**
- **Centres require to provide TAP test product evidence for each candidate in the sample selected for external verification. This evidence requires to be assessed and internally verified as appropriate for external verification.**
- **Remediation of practical standards which have not been met in the TESTS, when appropriate may be remediated in the TASKS**

In general, an increased centre internal verification focus should bring about the desired Q.A. improvements required in each of the above items

Construction and Civil Engineering Services SVQ level 2.

General comments:

This award is now being delivered solely by the challenging OSAT (On Site Assessment and Training) mode. There is a firm body of evidence which confirms that this is a “high risk” area, in the main owing to the dynamics of the construction site context in which the candidate evidence for the award is being generated.

Certification “Holds” and return visits are significantly higher in the OSAT mode, in comparison to the traditional delivery of construction SVQ qualifications.

Good Practice.

Confirming that the workplace evidence being presented is the work of each individual candidate, remains a major challenge in OSAT. Here are some examples of good practice which can assist the authenticating of this:

- Standardization meetings and events being recorded and formally minuted
- Candidate portfolio evidence is being presented in a manner which is easy to track and follow
- Well written and evaluative Direct Observations of candidate performances are being recorded as the Primary Evidence
- Direct Observations to include Employers name, location of site, date of observation, duration of observation and the exact location of the observation where the evidence is being generated (e.g. excavation at rear of house plot no. 37)
- Direct Observations require to be easily cross referenced to the PC’s in each unit
- A strong I.V. focus on the verification of Direct Observations on sites
- Passport type photos to be included at the start of each portfolio
- Secondary evidence including photographic sequences of the Direct Observations of the candidate operating in the workplace. Whenever possible, the candidate to be identifiable in these photographs
- Secondary evidence with witness statements from employers confirming the candidates relevant track record over a period of time in the workplace
- A clear set of reasons and body of evidence to be recorded in portfolios, which supports and confirms the assessors decision that a candidate has been declared competent
- Underpinning Knowledge Questions (UPQ) being conducted at a series of sittings rather than a single sitting for all units. This should meet each individual candidate’s assessment requirements.

Areas for further development

- Standardisation meetings and events to be held regularly and minutes of these to be recorded
- Candidate portfolio evidence to be presented in a manner by which it is easy to track the evidence to the standards of the units
- Direct Observations of candidate performances to be written in an evaluative manner which clearly convey the competences being demonstrated by the candidate
- Direct Observations require to be authenticated by including the employers name, location of site, date of observation, duration of observation and the exact location of the observation where the evidence is being generated (e.g. concrete foundation at house plot no. 237)
- Direct Observations require to be cross referenced and easily tracked to the PC’s for each unit

- **Sequenced photographic evidence to be used whenever possible which corroborate the direct observations which have been recorded**
- **Candidate feedback to be recorded which is informative and helpful to the candidate and the assessor in planning future assessments**
- **To avoid the Underpinning Knowledge Questions (UPQ) being conducted at a single sitting for all units for all candidates. The conduct of assessments should meet each individual candidates assessment requirements**
- **To clarify the assessors understanding of Primary and Secondary evidence and how these can complement and corroborate each other**
- **Site visits to be arranged wherever possible at locations which geographically minimise travelling and therefore make optimum use of the verifiers time**
- **Site visits to be arranged wherever possible at locations where there are groups of active candidates generating evidence**

NATIONAL UNITS

(i.e. Freestanding units which contribute to NPAs or NCs etc.)

TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS VERIFIED

Insert details below

Scottish Progression Award (SPA) and the National Progression Award (NPA) at Intermediate 1 & 2

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

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- *General comments*
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General comments:

The SPA in Construction was first introduced 5 years ago. It had become an established prevocational construction award in most centres curriculum infrastructure, and a significant number of candidates who come through the award have gained modern apprenticeships in construction. The wide variety of construction craft pathways available has proved very popular with candidates and centres.

The SPA has now been reviewed and has been relaunched last session as the National Progression Award (NPA). The NPA is built on the successful model of its predecessor, but has now even increased the range of craft units available and has further developed the flexibility, range and skills of the award.

The external verification visits which verify the specific craft disciplines of the e.v. specialist proved an effective and efficient model of verification. The e.v. visits have went very well and the new award is rapidly gaining momentum in establishing itself as a very credible prevocational introduction to construction craft courses.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Good practice

- **Internal verification is being applied effectively in many centres**
- **Feedback to candidates in many centres is being recorded in a positive manner and the Unit Assessment Record form is being used for this**
- **NPA standardization issues are being included on staff meeting agendas at many centres**
- **There was examples of good use of sequenced photographic secondary evidence being used in some centres**
- **The marking guidelines provided by SQA are being correctly interpreted across centres**
- **Centres are making full and thorough preparations for external verification visits**
- **Centre candidates are producing work which is well within the minimum acceptable standards as defined in the NPA checklists**
- **Candidates are developing basic H & S awareness including the wearing of appropriate PPE**
- **In general, standards are consistently high and external verification visit reports are being very positive**
- **Candidate feedback was consistently positive and many of them were now actively considering a career in construction**
- **Candidates portfolios were being properly managed and presented for external verification**
- **Centres were thoroughly prepared for the external verification visits**

Areas for further development include:

- **A few centres require to ensure that their internal verification system is being fully implemented**
- **A few centres require to ensure that their internal verification system is being fully implemented across all of the units**
- **Professional standards of tools and good quality brick would enhance the experience of the award for candidates**
- **When photographic secondary evidence is being used, whenever possible the candidate should appear in the photo, with the date and their name clearly identified for authentication purposes**

NATIONAL UNITS

(i.e. Freestanding units which contribute to NPAs or NCs etc.)

TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS VERIFIED

Insert details below

Skills for Work (SfW) Construction and Intermediate 1 & 2

DM7C 10	EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS – INT 1
DM7G 10	HALF BRICK WALLING – INT 1
DM7K 10	DECORATIVE PAINTING – INT 1
DM7J 10	SITE CARPENTRY AND BENCH JOINERY – INT 1
DM7E 10	PLUMBING

OPTIONAL UNITS

DM7W 10	PRACTICAL COPPER PIPEWORK – INT 1
DM81 10	BRICKWORK TECHNIQUES – INT 1
DM82 10	CARPENTRY AND JOINERY TECHNIQUES – INT 1
DM7Y 10	DECORATIVE FINISHES USING WATER-BORNE PAINTS – INT 1
DM7T 10	ELECTRIC INSTALLATION – INT 1
DMR7 10	PLASTERWORK – INT 1
DM7N 10	ROOF TILING – INT 1

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

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General comments

The SfW construction award continues to build on its unprecedented success of recent years. E.V. reports continue to be excellent, and in general assessment decisions are safe and reliable. Candidate evidence continues to be of a very good standard.

Schools and colleges are preparing for the e.v. visits in a manner which enables external verification to take place efficiently across the full award covering the Q.A. of all of the practical units and the employability unit simultaneously. Candidate feedback continues to be superb and many of these candidates express a motivation to pursue a career in construction after their SfW experiences.

Once again there is evidence that the SfW courses are over subscribed for next session and the ever increasing demand for these programmes are testimony to the outstanding success of this award.

Integration and assessment of the employability skills.

The Employability Skills unit continues to be fully integrated with the practical activities of the craft units. This fact was reflected in many external verifiers reports which confirmed that they were able to observe candidates in workshops demonstrating a variety of craft skills and simultaneously doing this in a manner which proved a range of employability skills including maintaining a tidy work area, following instructions, working with others, Health and Safety awareness and positive attitudes.

Internal Verification.

Internal verification records are confirming that standardisation is being maintained and candidate portfolios are readily available for e.v. visits, which enables random sampling to take place.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Good Practice

- **Good working relationships between candidate and assessors**
- **Good partnerships being established between schools and colleges**
- **Candidates were being well motivated**
- **Construction practical projects were being integrated with the SfW programme**
- **Candidates being responsible for their own portfolios**
- **Positive written feedback comments being recorded for candidates information and development**
- **Well developed induction programmes being used as an introduction to the courses**

Areas for further development

- **Whenever possible internal verifiers to be available during external verification visit**
- **Written feedback to candidate to be encouraged**
- **Photographic secondary evidence to be signed and dated for authentication compliance**
- **Encourage candidate to reflect on their employability skills as well as practical skills on their self review sheets**
- **To retain –wherever possible - samples of practical work (product evidence) for e.v. visits**
- **Each candidates evidence to be retained in individual portfolios**
- **To encourage staff CPD to continue to be developed in the various craft subject skills in order to meet the candidate needs**
- **To ensure that the SfW checklists are fully completed and that the correct standards are being applied. These checklists are to be available for e.v. visits**

