



**Higher National Qualifications,
Scottish Vocational Qualifications
And
National Qualifications
Internal Assessment/Senior Verifier Report
2008**

Subject: Carpentry and Joinery

Sector Panel or SSC: Construction

Date: 17/08/08

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

Four reports from different centres were available to compile this report. There were no holds placed and the full range of units was sampled.

This award (along with the other craft trades in the sector) is scheduled to commence a review in early 2009 and all centres visited were made aware of this by the EV. It is generally agreed that the award is in need of review both in terms of relevance and currency within the sector. To this end a detailed survey has been carried out for SQA and the findings will shape the development of the award.

The uptake for this award is the highest out of all the other Advanced Certificate awards offered in the sector and candidates interviewed were still very positive about the skills they were learning and also, but to a much lesser extent, the relevance to the workplace.

The centres visited were using centre devised assessment instruments which were valid, and in almost all cases reliable. One of the main changes to whatever new award is developed will be centrally devised assessment materials which will significantly assist both the internal and external verification process.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Good Practice

The following points of good practice were noted during external verification:

- **Good standard of practical work**
- **Very good Internal Verification systems and activity**
- **Very good feedback being given to candidates in both practical and written work**
- **The use of IT in various forms for both delivery and production of candidate evidence**
- **An increasing use of Computer Aided Drafting**

Further Development

As previously mentioned in this report the whole suite of Advanced Certificate awards in construction crafts is due for review in January 2009. There has already been an SQA hosted event where the findings of the independent survey were presented to the sector and comments were invited by the practitioners.

The main discussion from this surrounded the actual leveling of the award within the SCQF and whether there should be an additional award developed to progress to after the Advanced Certificate. The HNC could include the Advanced Certificate with a "generic" content of supervisory skills included. All of these points will be considered during the review process and will shape the framework of the new suite of awards.

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

SVQ Level 2 & 3 Carpentry and Joinery (TAP): 30 centres visited

SVQ Level 2 & 3 Wood Machining (TAP): Four centres visited

SVQ Level 2 & 3 Shopfitting: One centre visited

SVQ Level 2 On Site Assessment: Six centres visited

Customised Award: Boatbuilding: One centre

Development Visits: Five

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:

All the above External Verification visits resulted in only one “not accepted” decision being made. All the following comments relate to non OSAT (on Site Assessment Training) delivering centres and On Site Assessment will have a separate section within this report.

All the centres were using the TAP (Training and Assessment Programme), where available, and almost all of the staff interviewed were very positive and supportive of the programme. Whilst in the pilot stages centres had experienced difficulty in embracing the “holistic” approach to delivery and it would now seem that this approach in almost all centres has been adopted whenever and wherever resources make it possible. Also, candidates interviewed during the EV process were all very positive about the system and in particular commented on how beneficial the feedback process was. An underlying theme becoming apparent from the EV reports are the excellent working relationships centres have with their EV and the positive developmental ethos adopted by EV’s which enhances these relationships.

As with all new awards there were teething problems in the initial stages but a large majority of the delivering centres have participated in the review process either by attending quality networks, feeding back to their EV or completing the dedicated comment form on the SQA website. This information has proved invaluable in ensuring the edit process was as comprehensive as possible and centres should be commended on their participation and input.

The Shopfitting SVQ is being delivered in only one centre and there is no TAP available as of yet for this award. However, the centre should be commended on the work they have done to date in moving the delivery of this award towards a “holistic” type approach and are in the process of developing a candidate portfolio in conjunction with their EV.

A recurring theme in the EV reports is the need for centres to ensure the core skills, eg materials, science and drawing are fully delivered. These areas have been somewhat overlooked with perhaps too much of a holistic approach being adopted; however the inclusion of a unit syllabus in the TAP will overcome this problem. It is very reassuring however to see the much increased use of IT in centres both for delivery and production of candidate evidence.

EV’s have reported that centres have, in almost all cases, robust and comprehensive Internal Verification systems in place which are being applied effectively by appropriately qualified staff. All

centres are also complying with the Assessment Strategy in terms of Health and Safety, resources and CPD.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Good Practice

A wide and varied range of examples of good practice were noted throughout the reports, a sample of which is listed below:

- Internal Verification systems
- High quality of Candidate Portfolios
- The use of ICT in a range of situations
- Creative and holistic approach to assessment
- Site Visits and report writing
- Extended skills e.g. Manual Handling, Fire Extinguisher Training
- Integration of generic units
- Positive and constructive feedback to candidates
- High standard of practical work
- Compliance with Health and Safety
- Candidate log/diary and self evaluation paperwork
- Candidate progress records in portfolio
- Photographic evidence
- Use VLE's

Further Development

As previously mentioned in this report the TAP has undergone a review process and the revised paperwork will be with centres for the start of the new academic session. This has hopefully encompassed all the issues raised during the consultation process and will assist centres greatly in delivering the award. However centres should note the following points for clarity:

- All portfolios should be kept up to date on a planned weekly/block basis
- All portfolios must be signed and dated in the required places by both candidate and assessor and where appropriate the IV
- Portfolios must contain photographic evidence where required
- Portfolios should only contain documentation related to the assessment process
- Portfolios must contain signed Work Based Evidence Reports for the candidate and a sample will be signed by the EV
- A signature stamp is not acceptable
- An Internal Verification sampling plan must be available for EV's as well as evidence of internal verification taking place

Whilst it is necessary to re-enforce the above points it should be noted that in the vast majority of cases centres are complying with these issues.

On Site Assessment

Six centres were visited who were offering SVQ Level 2 Site Carpentry for experienced workers and resulted in one “not accepted” decision. The evidence generated for this approach is work based and requires the presenting centre to devise a portfolio in which to compile evidence to support the award. This method of assessment is challenging for all concerned and requires an experienced external verifier to undertake external verification to ensure the candidate is deserving of being awarded this qualification.

If a centre has a large number of candidates registered for an award the process of externally verifying is a long and laborious task and should ideally involve two experienced EV’s, one for portfolio work and the other to conduct site visits to observe and interview candidates in the workplace. The on-site part can involve a considerable amount of travel to a number of sites in a short period of time.

The reports available show that one of the weak areas in this type of approach are the Internal Verification systems used as well as the expertise of those carrying out the role.

It is apparent from Development Visit reports submitted that centres involved in this type of assessment benefit greatly from feedback from two EVs as well as EVs not feeling “isolated” in what can sometimes be a challenging environment.

STANDARD GRADE

ELEMENT / COURSEWORK VERIFIED

Insert details:

N/A

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General comments:

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

NATIONAL UNITS

TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS VERIFIED

Insert detail:

SPA BUILDING CRAFTS AT INT 1 & 2

NPA CONSTRUCTION AT INTERMEDIATE 1 & 2 LEVEL

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

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- *General comments*
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General comments:

The S/NPA in Construction has been very well received by centres and is seen to be an important part of the progression route within the sector. The old SPA units are still being used for Pre-Vocational type courses, mostly as either individual units or as a small cluster, but not the entire award. These units play a very important role at this level as they provide centres with a wide choice of relevant topics but do not overlap with other units. This is crucial to keeping progression routes open both in terms of funding and choice and therefore should be retained in the catalogue.

The NPA is still being established but all centres visited provided very positive responses to both the structure and content of the award. The award provides centres with a very flexible course, for a wide cohort of candidates. All the candidates interviewed during the EV process were very positive towards the course and recognised the benefits of gaining skills in either a wide range of areas or concentrating on one specific area, depending on the mode of delivery chosen by the candidate or adopted by the centre.

All centres visited had effective Internal Verification systems in place and assessment decisions were consistent, fair and reliable in all cases. This resulted in no holds being place for this award.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Good Practice

The standard of work produced by candidates was to a level acceptable for this award but in some cases far exceeded the minimum requirements. Centre staff were very supportive of candidates and encouraged them to achieve as high a standard as possible and most candidates relished this challenge. Some centres had further enhanced the course with the inclusion of core subjects such as drawing; numeracy; ICT and communication skills.

One centre had included several site visits and candidates developed their IT skills by producing a word processed report of their visits.

Documentary evidence was available to show several candidates had secured SVQ apprenticeships as a direct result of having undertaken this course. Also in more than a few instances candidates who had undertaken the Skills for Work course through a school /college partnership had progressed onto the S/NPA.

All centres were using the SQA devised assessment support packs and were very positive regarding their usefulness and relevance

Further Development

As mentioned previously in this report the S/NPA is a very important component part with regards to progression within the sector and, as evidenced, candidates do progress from Skills for Work courses. A major part of the SFW course is the emphasis on employability and citizenship skills and perhaps there is a missed opportunity within the S/NPA to keep re-enforcing these skills and to further develop them as candidates move closer to securing employment.

Centres should continue to provide prompt, supportive and constructive feedback to candidates and also encourage a “self evaluation” approach which should cover the soft skills as well as the more obvious and tangible skills.

Centres, wherever possible, should adopt a holistic approach to the delivery of the course/award as well as integration with other trade areas.

As more centres begin to offer this award the benefits of doing so will become more and more apparent to all concerned and should secure the awards place in a comprehensive framework within the sector.

COMPONENT / COURSEWORK IN NATIONAL COURSES

COMPONENT/COURSEWORK VERIFIED

Insert details

From the reports available there does not seem to be any issues highlighted regarding the design/manufacture/production of components within the award. Centres are encouraged to report any issues regarding this to SQA through the unit comment form which would subsequently be discussed at EV team meetings

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

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General comments:

Advice on good practice and areas for further development: