



**National Qualifications 2015  
Internal Assessment Report  
Core Skills: Information and  
Communication Technology**

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

# National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified:

## Core Skills Units

F3GC 08 Information and Communication Technology (SCQF level 2)

F3GC 09 Information and Communication Technology (SCQF level 3)

F3GC 10 Information and Communication Technology (SCQF level 4)

F3GC 11 Information and Communication Technology (SCQF level 5)

## General comments

Centres should note that the Core Skills Units do not form part of the Curriculum for Excellence development, therefore the Core Skills Units are unaffected by the changes introduced through the new National 1 to 5 qualifications. The Core Skills Units will continue to be available and will remain in their current format with no changes made to the standards they contain for the foreseeable future.

Some centres are employing an integrative approach to the delivery of Core Skills Units when taken in tandem with other qualifications. This approach is to be recommended as the Core Skills are then recognised by the learner as an integral part of the 'main' qualification and are not seen by the learner as an unnecessary add-on.

External Verifiers reported that many centres were using online recording methods for storing candidate evidence. So long as External Verifiers can be given access to these online records this we accept that this is an excellent method for portfolio/evidence building.

Some centres seem confused about what qualifications are required to assess and internally verify National Qualifications Core Skills Units. For NQ Units, staff need to show they have **competence** in assessment and/or internal verification rather than Assessor/IV paper qualifications (D, A, V, L&D etc.) which are only mandatory for the Workplace Assessed Core Skills qualifications.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

From our visits it was obvious that most assessors are very familiar with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials. Most centres, during the induction period, provide details to learners of what the qualification comprises and how they are expected to achieve this.

Many centres are using the SQA-published ASPs to ensure complete coverage of the requirements of the qualification. Many centres are contextualising these to suit the learner's experience. The Core Skills Exemplar Packs are another useful source of support materials for the delivery and assessment of Core Skills Units and these are available on SQA's secure website.

## **Evidence Requirements**

The vast majority of centres have a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements for the Units, however, it was noticed that in a few centres staff must ensure that the candidate can select and start up application software, not just follow instructions about which software to use.

Screen dumps are an excellent method of providing evidence of the use of tools. For example, a print screen of the Print Manager page with number of copies, orientation, and selected printer changed, etc or a screen dump of File Manager before and after changes could be used.

## **Administration of assessments**

Most centres were found to be following the SQA and qualification requirements for the delivery of these qualifications. Centres were seen to be delivering the qualifications to the correct level and most had robust and documented internal verification procedures.

Many centres are adopting online recording systems for the administration of the assessment process.

Since most centres have their policy documents electronically stored it would be possible to hyperlink these to an electronic template of the External Verifiers report form. This would lead to greater efficiency of the external verification process and reduce the incidence of centre staff looking for documentation on the day of the visit.

## **Areas of good practice**

The Core Skills Units emphasise the need to contextualise and personalise learning and offer the learners the opportunity to translate their Core Skills achievement into their everyday lives. Many centres have adapted the ICT learning and assessment with this in mind.

A number of centres have produced project work which is designed to allow the learner to produce the required evidence. This can be a suitable way to cover the requirements. Every effort should be made to source/provide candidates with assessment materials that relate to their specific area of work. You should work out where opportunities for meeting the standard are likely to arise. Where possible this should be built into the assessment process. You should also discuss this assessment process with the learners so that they are quite clear about what is expected from them.

Some centres keep detailed minutes of standardisation meetings, often including on-going reviews of assessment environment(s), assessment procedures, equipment and learning and assessment materials.

External verification reports and all policy documents are often uploaded to the centre's intranet to allow all staff access to current information.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

In a few centres with multiple sites it was noticed that different formats of assessment recording documents were being used. It is essential that a common format is used throughout the centre's various sites. The checklists within the SQA-published ASPs can be used as a template.

Centres should look for opportunities to develop assessments which are exciting and engaging for candidates. Opportunities should continue to be sought to use as much variety of natural evidence for assessment purposes as practical.

Although the SQA-published ASPs can be used for assessment purposes they were only developed as exemplars to give centres an indication of the level required. Centres can use the ASPs for assessment purposes, however, if they do it is strongly recommended that they are contextualised to suit the learners' interests.

Even if the SQA-published ASPs are used as assessment material they should first be subjected to the centre's internal verification system and this should be documented.