



**National Qualifications 2011  
Internal Assessment Report  
Managing Environmental Resources**

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

Ecosystems (D310): This is a component Unit of Managing Environmental Resources Courses at Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2.

Natural Resource Use (D312): This is a component Unit of Managing Environmental Resources Courses at Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2.

Land Use in Scotland (D316): This is a component Unit of the Managing Environmental Resources Course at Higher.

## General comments

Most centres provided evidence of a high standard.

Outcomes 1 and 2 were assessed using SQA NAB material in all the centres verified. In some centres, the NAB material used was not the most up to date available. It is worth noting that the older NAB questions do not reflect the current style of questions set in the external examination. Specific reference to updated NAB material is made below.

Outcome 3 evidence material was submitted by a number of centres. This was generally of a high standard, reflecting studies undertaken in the field/local area. It should be noted that at all levels a candidate must pass Outcome 3 before a pass in the Unit can be awarded.

Marking was generally accurate and consistent using the updated mark schemes. There is a notable increase in the number of centres submitting mark schemes with additions and adaptations to the published scheme. Developments in the management of the environment are changing at a rapid pace and MER reflects this dynamic aspect. Centres are therefore encouraged to add to the mark scheme where relevant examples are acceptable, particularly from the local area.

There was a notable increase in the number of centres carrying out internal verification which identified issues before the external verification process. Where verification has produced a change to a candidate's mark, this should be clearly recorded.

## Areas of good practice/areas for improvement

### Good practice

- ◆ Where NAB cover sheets were provided by centres, this made it easier to identify a specific candidate's work, in particular the NAB used and the overall mark and result.
- ◆ Clear identification of where marks had been awarded in accordance with the mark scheme, particularly in Learning Outcome 3 projects where Outcome criteria codes are used, assisted with the verification process.
- ◆ Some centres used a Learning Outcome 3 Criteria Checklist as part of their marking process, ensuring all areas are covered by the candidate. This also allows the candidate's work to be cross-referenced using the criteria codes. It is obvious where the candidate has completed a particular assessment criterion.
- ◆ There was clear evidence of internal verification in many centres, with some using different coloured pens to indicate separate markers.

- ◆ Some centres have used effective feedback to the candidates on their performance, which should assist with preparation for the Course assessment.
- ◆ Some centres used candidate and class record sheets effectively, particularly in Learning Outcome 3. This helped to supplement the information submitted on the Verification Sample Form.

### **Areas for improvement**

- ◆ Learning Outcome 3 reports, where stipulated in the Course Arrangements, should be impersonal, not 'I, you, we'.
- ◆ Graphs should be drawn using a pencil and ruler. Reference — External Assessment Report 2010.

### **Recommendations**

Centres are required to use the updated NAB material available on SQA's website. For each level, the most up to date NABs are listed and can be downloaded by the centre's SQA Co-ordinator.

The Verification Sample Form should be completed accurately and record only Pass/Failed/Withdrawn. Some centres record marks and percentages on these forms. This information can be recorded on a NAB Coversheet.

All evidence should be submitted for verification including failed Outcomes and re-assessments.

Centres are encouraged to submit Learning Outcome 3 evidence for verification where available.

Useful advice is contained in the External Assessment Reports found on the MER subject pages of SQA's website. The information contained in these reports is also relevant in preparation for internal assessment.