



**National Qualifications 2011
Internal Assessment Report
Personal and Social Development**

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

National Qualifications (NQ) Awards

Titles/levels of NQ Awards verified

C255 10, C255 11, C255 12 Personal Development Courses
G9D3 45 G9D4 46 Leadership Award
G9D2 43, G9CY 44 Employability Awards
G976 44, G9AH 45 NPA Enterprise and Employability
G9DO 43, G9RW 44 Steps to Work

General comments

NQ awards continue to provide an attractive option for schools, colleges and private training providers. The significant rise in approvals, development visits and verification activity supports the view that centres are keen to run with the new awards.

General feedback indicates that they are well structured and fit into the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence: confident individuals, successful individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. Also, these new awards are suitable for providing more opportunities for vocational training as set out in *Building the Curriculum 3 and 4* and to develop skills for learning, life and work in young people.

Employability Awards

These 'bite sized' Units at SCQF levels 3 and 4 offer 10 or 20 hours of learning, which allow candidates to achieve an Award within a notional 40 hours of learning. The Unit layout, and the flexibility to deliver two mandatory Units and one optional Unit, appeals to both candidates and centres. These Awards are being considered in a wide range of contexts — eg employability contexts within college settings, private training providers, induction programmes, and schools vocational programmes. The Awards comprise four Units: Preparing for Employment: First Steps; Building Own Employability Skills; Responsibilities of Employment; and Dealing with Work Situations.

NPA Enterprise and Employability

These National Progression Awards (NPAs) at SCQF levels 5 and 6 are designed to assess skills and knowledge in vocational areas linked to National Occupational Standards. In order to complete the Group Award, four credits must be successfully completed. A substantial part of the NPA contains Personal and Social Development (PSD) Units in self-awareness, self and work, enterprise activity, preparing to work, work experience and the Core Skill of Working with Others.

Leadership Awards

The Leadership Awards at SCQF levels 5 and 6 are proving very popular in the schools sector with fifth and sixth year pupils who are following a personal development course. The Awards offer bespoke qualifications in leadership skills and are proving to be a popular foundation for the delivery of enterprise skills and prior learning before applying to university. The Leadership Awards aim to help candidates understand the meaning of leadership by finding out about different leadership styles, skills and qualities. Candidates compare a variety of leaders and find out what makes an effective leader. Most importantly they are able to use the knowledge gained to help them consider their own potential for leadership

and to develop their own leadership abilities as they take on a leading role in a planned activity. The award comprises two Units: Leadership: an Introduction (20 hours) and Leadership in Practice (40 hours).

Personal Development

The Personal Development Courses can be offered from Access 2 to Higher levels. The Courses are project based and are being offered in schools, colleges and community-based settings. SQA's website features a number of good practice case studies on the Personal Development page. There is no external assessment for this Course but, as the case studies highlight, the benefit to the centres and to candidates is significant. Candidates develop their self-confidence and this has a huge impact both in their personal lives and in their studies thereby increasing their expectations for the future. The centres also benefit from the personal development activities through the positive ethos that these Courses help to develop. Candidates must pass all four Units at SCQF levels 4–6 to achieve the Course (160 hours of study). The four mandatory 40 hour Units are: Self Awareness; Self in Society; Self and Work; and Practical Abilities.

At SCQF level 3, the Course consists of three mandatory Units: Self in Society; Self and Work; and Practical Abilities (120 hours of study). The Self Awareness Unit is available as a freestanding Unit. Candidates can be entered for the Unit, but it is not included as a mandatory Unit in the Course at SCQF level 3.

Steps to Work

The Steps to Work Award supports and complements 16+ Learning Choices which is designed to encourage young people to remain in post-16 education as the best way of ensuring their long-term employability and contribution to society.

The structure of the award offers greater choice whilst recognising there is a growing demand for flexibility within qualifications and assessment. There is recognition of the wider achievement of learners through a person-centred approach to learning and matching this to practical contexts, eg personal development and employability skills matched to sports and outdoor activities, arts and media, community development, ICT, and work-related skills.

Course Arrangements documents, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

PSD involves assessing the process and not the end result which may or may not have been successful.

Where marking schemes were identified, SQA marking schemes, NAB (National Assessment Bank) items, SQA assessment exemplars and centre-devised materials were in use.

Centre-devised assessment instruments and marking schemes were not always appropriate and robust in the external verification sample. Centres were advised how to ensure internal assessment arrangements met the national standard.

Oral feedback often went unrecorded and was not documented by centres.

Some centres were advised during the external verification visit to develop master teaching packs which incorporate learning and teaching resources, an appropriate Unit specification, assessment instruments, exemplar materials, and a teaching schedule of the planned activities.

Evidence Requirements

Assessors do have a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements for Units and Courses and this is reflected in candidate responses:

- ◆ Candidates talked enthusiastically about the projects they had undertaken. They enjoyed the freedom to carry out challenging project tasks and to problem solve when making adjustments to team activities.
- ◆ Candidates talked about the value they had gained from undertaking PSD Units and their involvement in the wider community.
- ◆ Candidates expressed how they had gained confidence and enjoyed the experience of working in a project team.
- ◆ Others commented that they had developed the skill of being able to reflect on how they had carried out their tasks and to consider their own individual role and the role of others.

Candidates undertaking Personal Development Units and/or Courses were highly motivated and eager to talk about their experiences. Personal Development Units and Courses focus on self-development and provide a learning experience which is reflective and has a positive impact on individuals and their future personal, social and vocational goals.

The PD Units and the Course provide an excellent opportunity for young people to develop their self-confidence. The knock-on effect is a more mature approach to their studies and to building a positive ethos within the centre which was reflected in the variety of activities undertaken, eg fundraising events, enterprise activities, contributions and visits to the local/wider community, school trips, talks and presentations on specific subjects of interest — disability, discrimination, leisure pursuits, health, food and fashion.

Administration of assessments

There was some good evidence of robust internal verification procedures supported by relevant and appropriate documentation. Good practice included: subject knowledge expertise; teacher guides explaining the content of the Unit; teaching and learning approaches; and assessment procedures.

A number of centres still need to develop internal verification policy and procedures whilst others are more advanced. External Verifiers continue to refer assessors to SQA's *Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres*.

The majority of centres do have formal records of internal verification assessment decisions, with sampling and standardisation arrangements in place. There was good evidence of shared practice and networking within local areas.

External verification activity revealed assessments are at the appropriate level but assessors still need to be made aware of the need to differentiate between the levels based on five main principles:

- ◆ Amount of support learners receive
- ◆ Level of participation by learners
- ◆ Level of understanding of learners
- ◆ Complexity of tasks given to learners
- ◆ Level of maturity displayed by learners

There was a wide range of assessment evidence in use: blogs, logs, diaries, video, PowerPoint presentations, e-mail, interactive IT resources, photographs, wall displays, and assessor observations of candidate performance.

Project/folio work was exemplary. External verification sampling commended staff in their efforts to promote a high quality learning experience. Learning and teaching approaches encourage: self-awareness and self-evaluation; the development of interpersonal and task management skills; co-operative working; reflecting on the 'process'.

Assessment is mainly project or folio based and as such promotes open-book assessment conditions. Short-answer questions are commonly used as well as extended-response questions. Self-evaluation tools such as SWOT analysis and personality questionnaires are common practice in the delivery of PSD. Investigative and research methods prove popular with candidates as well as planned practical activities and events, eg fundraising, fair trade events, outward bound activities and work placements.

Areas of good practice/areas for improvement

- ◆ Written folio evidence with photographic and PowerPoint supporting evidence.
- ◆ Shared good practice across neighbouring schools supporting marking and internal verification procedures.
- ◆ The PD Course being used to strengthen the ability of pupils to secure a positive post-school destination and to develop a mature and positive attitude to their Course work.
- ◆ One centre had positively taken advantage of the personal context within the Personal Development Course and the themes running throughout Self in Society, Self and Work and Self Awareness. These followed a humanitarian, migration theme that celebrated the diversity of ethnicity within the school. This had an impact that reached beyond the pupils studying the Personal Development Course — the whole school appeared to benefit from the context.
- ◆ One school has piloted the use of SQA e-portfolio and uses this approach in the delivery of the PD Course at Higher level. Candidates are able to take part in an e-assessment process which allows evidence to be submitted outwith normal class time. The Intermediate 1 Course provides a range of community projects delivered across a wide range of catchment areas.
- ◆ Internal verification procedures revealing good evidence of prior verification, standardisation, candidate sampling, minutes and records of meetings. The PD assessor ensures internal verification is carried out using collaborative links within the school sector.
- ◆ The delivery of the Leadership Award at SCQF level 6 providing a structured course framework which allows candidates to gain a foundation of knowledge to build on, but at the same time to research and produce folio work to a very high standard. An outline of the assessment criteria enables the candidate to follow the assessment requirements and to focus on the project and the issues they plan to address.
- ◆ The internal assessment structure of the PD Course at Intermediate 1 in a particular school reveals detailed planning in the delivery of the programme and of the initial assessment stages. The Self Awareness Unit is very effective in building team spirit and confidence which is carried throughout the rest of the Course.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ A record that verbal interviews/class discussions have taken place.
- ◆ Evidence of ongoing monitoring of progress.
- ◆ Lack of formal documentation to record internal verification procedures.

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

(ie freestanding Units which contribute to NPAs or NCs etc.)

Titles/levels of NQ Units Verified

D36H 09/10 Work Experience

F57E 10 Enterprise and Employability: Working for Yourself

F2FV 10/11/12 Personal Development: Self Awareness

F37X 09/10/11/12 Self and Work

F37W 09/10/12 Self in Society

F37Y 10/12 Practical Abilities

F78C 12 Leadership: An Introduction

F78D 12 Leadership in Practice

D36N 10 Enterprise Activity

F57F 10 Preparing to Work

General comments

Centres have a very clear and accurate understanding of the national standards required in the delivery of PSD (Personal Social Development) Units.

Many of the Units sampled during external verification activity have been delivered in centres for a number of years. Staff are familiar with the Evidence Requirements and this is exemplified in the number of centres where good practice has been identified in a variety of subjects, eg Work Experience, Enterprise and Employability, PD Units and Leadership Skills.

In general, development issues underpin the need to understand the generic subject of PSD and the stages of the 'process' in planning, implementing, reviewing and evaluating.

Centres are very well organised for external verification visits. Internal verification systems and procedures support the high standards of delivery in PSD. Some ad hoc procedures exist but this is being addressed during visiting external verification. Centres are being encouraged to formalise their procedures and to develop an internal verification policy.

Great emphasis has been placed on the need for standardisation procedures. Verifiers have explained how this should operate and this is beginning to develop, eg sampling candidate folios across Outcomes and occurrences, standardising the delivery of Units taught within a department and within the organisation itself, especially where there is a high uptake in PSD Units within the centre.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

External Verifiers consistently commented that assessors were very familiar with the Unit specification requirements and were exemplifying a high standard. In the words of one External Verifier 'this work is simply outstanding'.

Some assessors have up-to-date learning and teaching materials contained in master files. Internal verification procedures and records are made available to the External Verifier.

External verification visits did contain a strong element of development as new Units and awards were being delivered, eg Employability and Enterprise, Steps to work, Personal Development, and Leadership skills. Assessors were keen to discuss assessment instruments and exemplification. External Verifiers make a judgement as to whether the

development issues discussed during a visit require a separate development visit. Often assessment and exemplification of the standards is clarified through short discussion and clear direction during the external verification visit.

Evidence Requirements

There is a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements within the Units and this is exemplified in the small number of Holds placed on centres and the exemplary candidate folio evidence that was reflected in the verification activity in Personal Development.

Centres do have a clear understanding of the flexibility open to them to generate candidate evidence in a variety of formats: electronic, written and/or oral, observation, product evidence, practical activities, wall displays, blogs, photographic, brainstorming and mind mapping, force-field analysis, SWOT analysis, Johari windows, short answers and questions, logs (often colour highlighted to track specific evidence), individual and group presentations, group celebrations/events, outdoor activities and planned trips.

Administration of assessments

Centre assessments tend to utilise SQA Assessment Support Materials (ASPs) and National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials and as such these materials are geared towards the national standard.

External Verifiers promote the use of SQA's website for PSD support materials, Unit specifications, Arrangements documents, highlighted good practice and internal assessment reports. Centres are encouraged to access the Understanding Standards website and to consider taking part in marking assessment evidence exemplars.

Centre internal verification procedures were a high priority focus during external verification activity in 2010–11. Verifiers were made aware of the need to support centres to help them to develop a formal approach that reflected their internal processes.

Areas of good practice/areas for improvement

Visiting verification highlighted a number of generic comments on good practice as detailed below:

- ◆ Project tasks were clearly negotiated with candidates with the right level of tutor support given to identify areas for investigation. Project templates enabled candidates to capture the evidence required for assessment purposes. The sharing of good practice is exemplified in the delivery of individual/group presentations to peers and to the wider community within the school/college or partner provider.
- ◆ There is good evidence of candidates being fully involved in the selection process of their work experience placement. The majority of centres use an electronic database system which allows candidates to access a wide range of local authority placements and to match their suitability to their own circumstances.
- ◆ Work experience good practice was fully exemplified in one centre where teaching timetables were adjusted accordingly to allow staff to visit candidates in their work placement. The school supports the delivery of the work experience programme and shows a remarkable resilience in the placing of young people given the nature of the rural locations involved.

- ◆ Personal Development Units are increasingly utilising a wide range of assessment methods for generating folio evidence, eg photographic, wall displays, posters, oral and written evidence, observation, witness testimony, product evidence and e-mail.
- ◆ Candidates undertaking the Leadership in Practice Unit delivered in a centre exemplified the benefits of undertaking such an Award. The pupils were excellent ambassadors for the Award their tutor and the school. They were proficient and communicated excellently the benefits that they had gained from studying the course and how they would be used post-school in their lives and future careers. They exemplified the in-house school motto of 'Learning to lead and learning to learn'.
- ◆ The internal verification of the Leadership: An Introduction Unit in the same centre was excellent. An internal verification policy was in place and meticulous record keeping was well documented. Candidate assessments were stored securely via the internet allowing instant access to candidate work.
- ◆ Good practice involved holding regular meetings to discuss assessment procedures and standards in the delivery of Personal Development Units.
- ◆ One school provides an innovative delivery of the Work Experience Unit at Intermediate 1. Teachers volunteer to mentor, support and assess candidates enrolled in Work Experience and receive 10 hours of continuing professional development credit. The mentoring system operates at interval, lunch and after school hours. The work experience co-ordinator provides briefing information and internal training for staff involved in mentoring.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Candidate feedback was not always consistent across the evidence sampled, eg subject levels, occurrences, project investigations, folio evidence, workbooks, diaries/logs.
- ◆ There was limited evidence of marking criteria used in the delivery of work experience programmes.
- ◆ Some centres continue to assess the Work Experience Units (Outcome 4) using an English essay in partnership with the English department. While this may be an effective means of delivery for centres, it is not a requirement for the Unit and should not be used as assessment criteria in order to pass the Unit.
- ◆ A significant number of centres need to produce formal internal verification policy and procedures. External visiting verification provided development support in relation to systems and procedures, eg minutes of meetings, recording assessment decisions, sampling, standardisation, and the requirements of the internal verification process. External Verifiers highlighted the resource handbooks available on the SQA website (*Internal verification: A Guide for Centres*).
- ◆ The need to record feedback formally using an evidence checklist.
- ◆ The identification of skills and qualities in the delivery of work experience must be used to inform the Work Experience process.