

Moderation Feedback - Visiting

Assessment Panel:

Technical Education

Qualification area

**Subject(s) and Level(s)
included in this report**

**Practical Craft Skills: Woodworking Skills Int. 1 &
Int. 2; Engineering Craft Skills Int. 1 & Int. 2**

Visiting Moderation

General comments on visiting moderation activity

On this the fourth year of Practical Craft Skills, both Woodworking Skills and Engineering Craft Skills courses again proved to have run smoothly. The courses were found by members of the moderation team to have been organized and conducted to a very high professional standard. This was reflected in the very positive reports, which almost universally agreed with the internal assessments. The fact that there were very few calls to SQA regarding moderation issues also confirmed that there were no major outstanding concerns.

As Practical Craft Skills continues to be firmly established within the curriculum there is increasing evidence, especially at the upper end of the ability range, that craft skills are improving with the increasing popularity and uptake among candidates.

The success of these courses is due mainly to the simple, straight-forward, graduated structure that enables candidates to develop self-confidence and provides for a clear and direct internal assessment of a wide range of basic craft skills.

There is evidence of a substantial enthusiasm among candidates at all levels, and that they are motivated by the practical nature of learning tool skills and working with machines in a workshop environment.

Specific issues identified

Administration

Because both the internal assessment and subsequently the assessment moderation process were generally well conducted, there were no major issues to contend with. However, apart from the on-going developmental programme, a number of minor points were noted:

The degree of teacher assistance – extended notes on the reverse of the Master Record Sheet was in the main well done but a few centres are not entering sufficient subjective detail about the amount of additional help required by each candidate. As will be appreciated, this kind of information greatly helps in the moderation process.

There is still a variation in the quality and degree of finish between some centres. This appears to be because of time constraint towards the end of the course and candidates having to rush the finishing processes.

It has been noticed in the moderation process that there is a difference in the timing between when the final marks are submitted to the SQA on Internal Assessment Mark Form (Green) and the date of the moderation visit. In a few instances there is a substantial difference in the quality of the artifact by the time the moderator sees it. In some cases the internal assessed marks given on the sample form bear little relationship to the quality seen by the moderator. This would seem to indicate that in the interval between marking and moderation the candidates have been working to improve the skills evidence. This will require clarification.

Woodworking Skills

The candidate skills evidence was found to be very good in all project work with regard to joint forming and fitting. The work was found to be excellent at the Intermediate 2 level. There was evidence of great care and attention to detail in aspects such as:

- Tolerances well within the limits specified, especially at Intermediate 2 level.
- Crisp arrises corner details

- Well prepared external surfaces
- Well applied finishing coatings in most cases

While the quality of the vast majority of turnery evidence was found to be very good / excellent some centres have allowed candidates some freedom to design

- The split turnery
- The finial at the top
- The rake of the angled top coping detail.

This may be acceptable if the candidates first draw the profile / shape / detail and then work to the sizes and form created – Only if no size or shape is specified in the NAB drawing. Small design variations from the NAB specification should be applied to the whole teaching group and shown on the drawing to the moderator.

Engineering Craft Skills

While this subject still has a lower centre uptake than Woodworking Skills, candidates in the presenting centres have demonstrated craft skills of a very high quality, in terms of bench skills, machining processes, fabrication and welding and surface preparation and finishing.

The following points however were noted:

- Centres to be advised not to encourage candidates to apply a heavy paint finish to projects until after the moderation is completed – Tends to obscure the quality of welding evidence.
- Pre-threaded bar to be used only by Int. 1 candidates. – Bike Clamp
- Centres to be advised to disregard the previously produced NAB drawing. of the Bike Clamp showing a single 15 mm hole instead of a slot.

Practical Electronics

Although only a few centres have presented the alternative Practical Electronics unit, these candidates have demonstrated by their enthusiasm that this is an excellent and thoroughly motivating course option, however the following points were points were observed:

1. This product, as an assessment instrument, has the potential for generating great motivation in candidates by its usefulness and enjoyment potential.
2. The electronic teaching material used has been developed from previous SEB Short Courses in Electronics and is able to provide adequate coverage of the course, up to and beyond Int. 2 level.
3. The bench skills and machining processes element, while it covers all of the outcomes and PCs, the resulting small scale of the formed sheet metal housing box may prove too difficult for some candidates at Int. 1 level.
4. There is a fairly strong case for the presentation of this unit being divided between the Technology and the Physics departments if timetabling allows. However due to the split nature of the teaching components there is a risk that some degree of continuity may be lost by candidates working between two departments and disciplines. The recording and sharing of assessment information would require to be strictly conducted so that candidates could gain the maximum benefit from evidence generated.
5. As far as the Assessment Moderation is concerned, apart from an overall check on the continuity of the circuit, the testing and checking of the circuit proved difficult due to the small scale of the assembly. Checks could not realistically be made on:

- The quality of the fixing of the electronic assembly
- The layout of the components on the printed circuit board
- The rating and functionality of individual components on the pcb
- The quality of the soldered joints on the pcb

It is considered that these difficulties would be met in the moderation of any integrated circuit incorporated in a box-construction device and the very nature of these projects necessitates them being of a small scale.

PCS in S3

There is evidence that the number of candidates being presented for Practical Craft Skills is increasing substantially and there is now a fairly urgent need for new unit and course project material to be produced.

Secondary school centres who have been presenting courses to S3 candidates for the first time have found the process quite challenging in the early stages. The difference in maturity and tool-handling experience of these pupils demands a different and more structured approach to class management. Centres are already sharing methods and systems that they have found to be useful.

Since more and more centres are presenting PCS in S3 at Int. 1 and some with a view to continuing at Int. 2 level in S5/6, they are looking for a range of unit and course project artefacts as alternatives to those already produced.

There is a need therefore to expand the bank of alternative unit and course projects, in both Engineering Craft Skills and Woodworking Skills, as Assessment Instruments that have been prior-moderated. There is an increasing demand for additional appropriate work for centres where the course project is completed early. Ideas and drawings, which have been prior-moderated, could be circulated to centres possibly on CD format or through the Smart Group.

Feedback to centres

Woodworking Skills

Although the courses were generally well conducted some centres need to be reminded:

To enter full details of candidate internal assessment on the Moderation Sample Form.

To enter full details of additional help required by candidates on the reverse of the Master Record Sheet. It should be stressed that centres can assist the moderation process further by inserting subjective notes for each candidate to support the 'indication of degree of independence'.

Examples might be:

- ❑ Reasons for being marked down on a particular process.
- ❑ Details of poor attendance or absence through illness.
- ❑ Details of changes in rate of performance over the course.
- ❑ Details of re assessment performance.

To instruct candidates to run a rebate along the bottom of the clock rear of the carcass to allow the back ply to be seated more securely.

That the quality of the surface preparation and the application of an appropriate surface finish is an important part of the final project assessment and sufficient time should be allowed for these processes to be applied adequately.

Not to use the NAB project drawing intended for Intermediate 1 candidates for all candidates in the teaching group where there is mixed ability. Candidates should be given the working drawing, and instruction, appropriate to their potential to generate assessment evidence.

NAB Clocks

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Evidence of great care and attention to detail

- Tolerances well within the limits specified, especially at Intermediate 2 level.
- Crisp arrises and turnery detail
- Well prepared external surfaces
- Well applied finishing coatings

However to ensure the maintenance of increasingly high standards of craft skills the following points could be passed on to centres.

- Ensuring candidate gauge marks are restricted only to the mortice lengths and to tenon shoulders so that no gauge marks show on finished work.
- All saw and machine marks are removed.
- All dimensions on the finished work match those on the drawing.
- All joints are 'flushed off' using a sharp, finely set bench plane. – No lips at shoulders etc.

- All pencil and glue marks removed before application of finishing coatings.
- Ply backs to carcasses and flat frames to be sawn in such a way that no ragged edges show on the finished face.

Engineering Craft Skills

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