



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications 2011
Internal Assessment Report
Wood Machining, Sawmilling and
Extrusion**

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

SVQ awards

Titles/levels of SVQ awards verified

General comments

There is at present only one centre delivering this award.

The centre had a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards. The centre was working with the most recent versions of the nationally devised assessment instruments and Unit specifications and using them effectively. They were recording candidate achievement by means of an individual portfolio system and had appropriate documentation to support the process. This linked in with recording/reporting mechanisms from Construction Skills and proved to be very effective.

Discussions with the assessor and Internal Verifier confirmed the centre were very conversant with the requirements of the award and any development points noted were more fine-tuning as opposed to significant lack of knowledge.

Comments from the External Verifier (EV) regarding the quality of the work presented for sampling also confirmed that the centre was fully conversant with the requirements of the award. It is pleasing to note that the standard of work presented has improved overall, ranging from good to exceptional.

It is also encouraging to note that the centre had acknowledged the importance of concentrating on the quality of finish of the practical work in the early stages of the award. The need to fully develop candidates' skills at this stage is critical as it prepares them for the more demanding criteria at later stages in the course.

An essential part of this process, which has been highlighted is the need to give candidates feedback that is constructive and timeous. This allows the assessor to set standards early on in the formative assessment process and undoubtedly assists candidates to achieve the required summative standards.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The centre visited was familiar with the course structure and documentation. The centre was satisfying the requirements of the Unit specifications in a range of ways that were maximising the candidate experience.

Candidates were gathering evidence from a range of activities and experiences to satisfy the requirements of the generic units. This in itself demonstrated a great depth of knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the award from the assessors, who were able to track candidates' progress across a range of disciplines.

Last session the EV noted there was a requirement for assessors to develop, or further develop, a comprehensive tracker system to ensure that opportunities were not lost in recording evidence for the generic Units. The EV reported this session that there has been a lot of work done in this area and the situation is improving all the time. The centre was putting more responsibility on to the learner to gather and record this type of evidence (in line with Curriculum for Excellence).

In the current climate of falling numbers and composite groups, it is essential the centre ensures that all of the course content is fully covered. To maintain viability the centre is continually developing learning materials which are more student centred (rather than all lecturer led) to assist in the delivery with an ever increasing amount of intranet and VLE-based materials.

Evidence Requirements

The centre continues to demonstrate a wide and innovative range of approaches to gather evidence for this award creating an assessment environment conducive to gathering the required evidence in terms of: standard; amount; relevance and reliability.

The assessor should be proud of his continuing ability to interpret standards, create a positive learning environment and provide the opportunity for candidates to generate evidence in increasingly challenging situations.

Administration of assessments

The centre was using the nationally devised assessment materials which assured the assessments were at the appropriate level and met all the PCs for each Unit. Through discussions with candidates, the EV confirmed that, in all cases, assessments were being administered at an appropriate time during the delivery of the course and there were some good examples of an integrated approach being adopted for the more generic type Units/assessments.

Candidates were given responsibility for tracking their own progress through a portfolio approach and they were being provided with good, clear, constructive feedback on an ongoing basis which helped them develop confidence.

The assessor was making fair, reliable and consistent decisions across the range of Units being delivered.

Internal verification was taking place and was proving to be reliable and effective. In this centre, specific mention was made of the efficient systems in place which mostly included electronic documentation and recording systems. Centre staff were all working to the V1 standards.

Further general feedback

Feedback to candidates

The EV commented very positively on the quality of feedback given to candidates.

As previously mentioned in this report, the centre has acknowledged the importance of feedback in the formative and summative assessment process and is using it to good effect.

Feedback from candidates

Discussions with candidates confirmed that feedback was very beneficial to them and had formed an important part of their course. They commented on how feedback was seen as a positive element of their course and that the support which they received from their lecturer/s was very good.

Candidates felt that the structure of the course was good and well managed. The knowledge and understanding element of a course such as this can sometimes prove to be a challenge

for some candidates but almost all of those interviewed could see the relevance of Core Skills and the future benefits.

Access to assessment

There were no barriers to assessment and in the current climate the centre was demonstrating an even greater than usual amount of flexibility to ensure candidates were not disadvantaged in any way. To accommodate employer and managing agent requirements the centre was amending attendance patterns and providing, in some instances, additional time outwith the normal working day to allow candidates to prepare for, or, attempt assessments. Candidates in this situation were very appreciative of this approach, which allowed them to keep on-track with their studies as well as to satisfy their employer's demands.

There were examples of additional support being provided for candidates with additional needs which ensured they had fair access to assessment.

Areas of good practice

The only area of good practice reported was the continued use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in the machine workshops and a strong emphasis on health and safety.