



Higher National Qualifications

And

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Senior Verifier Report

2007

Subject: **Computing (357)**
 Information Systems (358)

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on moderation, which has taken place within Higher National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

HIGHER NATIONAL UNITS

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Verification activity statistics relating to **HN Units** for **Session 2006-07** are as follows:

| | |
|---|------------|
| Number of HN Verification Reports submitted for analysis (includes 1 COVE) | 32 |
| Number of Centres verified | 22 |
| Total number of individual HN Unit submissions verified | 147 |
| Number of HN Unit submissions accepted | 143 |
| Number of Units put on Hold | 4 |
| Number of Holds removed | 4 |

General comments:

The modified EV8a form is providing useful information from verification visits, allowing more detailed and informative feedback to centres and to other interested stakeholders. From the statistics above it can be seen that out of 147 units selected for external verification, only 4 failed to be accepted at the first attempt – this is a 97.3% success rate. The holds placed on the 4 units, which were considered not acceptable, were subsequently removed as a result of corrective action on the part of the presenting centres, and through advice and support provided by verifiers

Once centre requested verification to be carried out during a COVE (**C**oordinated **V**erification **E**vent)

The 32 reports analysed show that verifiers were, in general satisfied, with centre arrangements for the assessment, collection and presentation of candidate materials for verification. Favourable comments were made in relation to the quality of internal verification that had taken place. The systems in place demonstrate robustness and work well. Centres are maintaining appropriately detailed master folders for each unit, which generally contain the unit descriptor, unit summary sheet, delivery schedule(s), instruments of assessment, sample solutions and where appropriate, marking schedules. In general the assessment process had been found to be of an acceptable standard in all centres covered by the 32 reports. It is now clear to see where and why assessment decisions had been made, a situation that had been commented on adversely in previous years.

The requirement for EVs to interview assessors and IVs at each visit was also considered a positive move forward. These discussions appear to have been profitable, judging by the comments made by EVs. Assessors are continuing to append suitable comments on candidate scripts thus providing effective and instructive feedback. The reports suggest there was an appropriate consistency of assessment, over the units and centres verified.

There were few development points identified, and those made last session were monitored and appear to have been addressed appropriately.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Verifiers identified and reported on good practice issues found during their various visits. These included:

- High standard of centre documentation and candidate submissions
- Opportunity to verify appropriate items on line – centres assessing and storing evidence electronically (green footprint)
- Internal verification activities, some automated, continue to develop and are in general robust. Some were examined and, where appropriate, advice provided on potentially beneficial changes provided
- Candidate authentication procedures are becoming more evident
- Inclusion of clear guidelines for DDA and Equality issues
- Regular changes implemented to instruments of assessment is considered appropriate in reducing plagiarism
- Where used, centres make good use of vendor delivery and assessment methodology, and ensure candidates are guided well through the process(es)
- Good frequency of internal verification meetings and recording thereof
- High quality of candidate feedback being provided
- Appropriate use of cross assessment between allied/supporting/complementary units
- Positive and encouraging assessor comments on candidate scripts
- Integration of assessments across units used where appropriate
- Increased use of centre VLEs noted, with good high quality materials
- Targeted integration of CPD with career review leading to enhanced learning processes noted
- Embedding of personal, core, vocational, employability skills and citizenship within appropriate units is becoming more evident
- Effective use of date stamps on programme plans identifying the IV and date of verification activity
- Use of plagiarism notice on instruments of assessment becoming more widely used
- Web based online tuition packages used to support independent candidate learning - thus providing useful feedback from candidates, which is, in turn acted upon
- Appropriate mentoring support of new assessors and IVs
- Multiple versions of instruments of assessment – large print, use of photographs etc
- Range of employed (project) scenarios allowed candidates considerable scope in implementing their solutions
- Forward planning becoming more evident
- Candidate tracking sheets allowed progress through unit(s) to be clearly monitored

HIGHER NATIONAL GRADED UNITS

TITLES/LEVELS OF HN GRADED UNITS VERIFIED

Verification activity statistics relating to **HN Graded Units** for **Session 2006-07** are as follows:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Number of Graded Unit Reports submitted for analysis | 51 |
| Number of Centres verified | 29 |

Units verified:

| | | |
|----------------|--|-----------|
| DV6D 34 | Information Technology – Graded Unit 1 | 7 |
| DE36 34 | Interactive Media Creation – Graded Unit 1 | 18 |
| DG0J 34 | Computer Networking – Graded Unit 1 | 3 |
| DF6E 34 | Multimedia Computing & Web Development – Graded Unit 1 | 7 |
| DF6F 35 | Multimedia Computing & Web Development – Graded Unit 2 | 5 |
| DG0H 35 | Computer Networking & Internet Technology – Graded Unit 2 | 4 |
| DN4N 35 | Computing: Software Development – Graded Unit 2 | 10 |
| DN4P 35 | Computing: Software Development – Graded Unit 2 | 13 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Total number of individual graded unit submissions verified | 67 |
| Number accepted at first verification attempt | 66 |
| Resubmissions required (ultimately accepted) | 1 |

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

General comments:

The statistics presented above demonstrate that centres are now assessing and marking graded unit responses in a much more consistent and acceptable way, than has perhaps been the case in previous academic sessions.

Assessors are now interpreting the marking guidelines provided in a more sympathetic manner and are clearly using their professional judgment to good effect, by accepting candidate responses which are correct, but which may not be explicitly listed within provided marking guidelines.

Graded Units, which are examinations, did not show the variation of marking, and hence overall candidate grades, which had been evident in the past. The quality of centre devised examination papers, although few in number also showed distinct improvement in content and presentation.

Project based graded units were also acceptable. Verifiers, although accepting the project unit results as demonstrated above, clearly pointed out where they felt centres needed to tighten their marking and pointed out which particular sections of the marking regime required most attention. This was in the majority of cases, in the evaluation section of the marking exercise. Evaluation was present but did not have the prominence expected or required. Technical content was considered appropriate and acceptable.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Verifiers identified and reported on good practice issues found during their various visits. The points listed are also presented as areas for potential further development for centres not already implementing them. These included:

- Robust and transparent internal verification procedures
- Good use of e-verification and VLEs
- Effective, consistent and fair assessment decisions being made
- Good candidate feedback being provided – documented and verbal
- Clear interpretation of marking guidelines
- Innovative student project case study scenarios
- Well presented, high quality candidate evidence
- Good recording of team activities – minutes, responsibilities, actions required etc
- Projects being submitted on CD/DVD – easy for Verifier to gain an overview of project
- Good candidate project team interaction taking place
- Double marking continues to be developed and is to be recommended
- Centres advised to make fullest use of available Assessment Exemplar material rather than developing their own, unless local conditions dictate otherwise

SVQ AWARDS

TITLES/LEVELS OF SVQ AWARDS VERIFIED

Verification activity statistics relating to **SVQ Awards** for **Session 2006-07** are as follows:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Number of SVQ Reports submitted for analysis | 11 |
| Number of Centres verified | 11 |

SVQ Awards verified:

| | | |
|----------------|---|----------|
| G7JF 21 | IT User – level 1 | 2 |
| G7JG 22 | IT User – level 2 | 6 |
| G7JH 23 | IT User – level 3 | 7 |
| G7P4 22 | Computing: IT Practitioner – level 2 | 1 |
| G7P5 23 | Computing: IT Professional – level 3 | 3 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Total number of individual SVQ Awards verified | 19 |
| Number accepted at first verification | 19 |

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

General comments:

The number of centres offering VQs in the verification group area remains small. However the level and quality of activity among the centres offering VQs as stated above, remains at an acceptable level, as witnessed by the complementary Verifier comments made in EV8a reports. Centres continue to employ suitable robust assessment practices, based on real work. Internal verification regimes continue to develop and improve.

The construction of portfolios continues to be more streamlined, with documentation relating to health and safety and other central considerations for example, being referred to, rather than having the (bulky) text within individual portfolios. All of the centres verified were accepted.

Candidate evidence was in general well laid out and easy to follow. There was also clear evidence of the internal verification procedures taking place, suitably recorded and backed up by printed schedules of activity. There is evidence of increased use of electronic portfolio generation and recording software.

The requirement to work to V2 standards provides useful additional information about the centre delivery and support of the VQ being offered. The tracking of Assessor and IV CPD activity as well as the interviews with candidates, Assessors and IVs, provides a useful insight into the conduct of the relevant VQ. The general impression is of good national standards being maintained within centres still offering items taken from this particular suite of awards

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Verifiers identified and reported on good practice issues found during their various visits. The points listed are also presented as potential areas for further development for centres not already implementing them. These included:

- Well organised and comprehensive candidate induction packs available
- Progress through units easy to follow through documentation
- Comprehensive CPD records available for inspection - assessing staff are keeping their skills up to date
- Well constructed evidence matrices
- Candidate awareness of K & U increased by use of centre devised learning logs
- Good supplementary questioning to underpin K & U
- Assessor reports were clear and suitably detailed
- Use of hyper links within mandatory units to other relevant evidence
- Well constructed candidate portfolios, cross referencing clearly made
- Witness testimony and professional questioning all appropriately dated, and being signed by both candidate and assessor
- Assessor reports provide good feedback and can in some cases, be used by candidates as evidence items themselves
- Individual candidate action plans highlighted areas of concern to be concentrated on
- Production and recording of product evidence was clear
- Positive evolution of centre documentation is evident
- Assessment planning documentation is of a high standard.
- General attention to overtaking action points raised
- Continual review of IV procedures is taking place
- Centres provide friendly and supportive atmosphere for their candidates
- Countersigning and annotating artifact evidence taking place
- Use of one evidence item in more than one evidence claim is developing
- Suitable range of evidence types evident

NATIONAL UNITS

(i.e. Freestanding units which contribute to NPAs or NCs etc.)

TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS MODERATED

No reports submitted for analysis / comment

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

General comments:

Advice on good practice and areas for further development: