



National Qualifications 2007

Skills for Work Courses

Lead Verifier Report

**SfW Course: Construction Crafts
Intermediate 1**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to participating centres on external verification which has taken place within phase 2 of the Skills for Work pilot.

SKILLS FOR WORK COURSES

CONSTRUCTION CRAFTS

TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS EXTERNALLY VERIFIED

MANDATORY UNITS

DM7C 10	EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS
DM7G 10	HALF BRICK WALLING
DM7K 10	DECORATIVE PAINTING
DM7J 10	SITE CARPENTRY AND BENCH JOINERY
DM7E 10	PLUMBING

OPTIONAL UNITS

DM7W 10	PRACTICAL COPPER PIPEWORK
DM81 10	BRICKWORK TECHNIQUES
DM82 10	CARPENTRY AND JOINERY TECHNIQUES
DM7Y 10	DECORATIVE FINISHES USING WATER-BORNE PAINTS
DM7T 10	ELECTRIC INSTALLATION
DMR7 10	PLASTERWORK
DM7N 10	ROOF TILING

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

General comments:

In general terms the SfW Construction Crafts Intermediate 1 course is being successfully delivered in centres and is proving to be an excellent all round pre-vocational experience for candidates. Reports from External Verifiers indicate that in general, assessment decisions are reliable and consistent and candidate's product evidence is of a very good standard.

Most centres are preparing for external verification visits by presenting samples of candidates product evidence/practical work. Candidate feedback is universally positive about the course and there is emerging evidence that many of them are progressing to employment in construction and thereafter embarking on Modern Apprenticeship SVQ programmes in a variety of construction crafts.

Possibly, the most significant aspect of the success of the SfW programme is the manner in which it is being perceived by candidates. There is gathering evidence that this "word of mouth" to their peers and colleagues at school is creating ever increasing demands for placements on the SfW construction courses.

Integration and assessment of employability skills:

The employability skills unit is being successfully integrated with the ongoing practical activities of the programme. This is effectively encapsulating the aspirations of the SfW programme, by developing the candidates abilities and awareness of everyday workplace requirements including, good timekeeping, regular attendance, working well with other people, taking advice from others, checking their own work, awareness of Health and Safety and wearing personal protective equipment.

Candidates who were interviewed often demonstrated excellent awareness of the employability skills aspect of the programme, which teaching staff is to be commended for.

The self evaluation which candidates carry out is proving effective in improving candidate's performance.

Carrying out direct observations was the most effective methods of being able to confirm candidate employability skills during external verification visits. External verifiers were able to observe candidates arriving in time at the workshop, wearing the appropriate PPE, following instructions, maintaining tidy work areas, minimising waste while working, Health and Safety awareness, and many of the other employability skills.

Internal Verification

Most centres are implementing internal verification documentation in a manner which should help to ensure standardisation across the various craft units of the award and the employability unit. This included examples of minutes of standardisation meetings, candidates to be sampled being listed on class registers, countersigned checklists, centre stamped checklists etc.

Most centres are also presenting examples of candidates' practical work and product evidence with accompanying checklists which have been subject to internal verification. This enables the external verifier to confirm the reliability of the centres assessment decisions as well as the effectiveness and robustness of the internal verification system.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

- Most centres are holding standardisation meetings across the various crafts with lecturers/teachers
- Candidates being well briefed on the employability skills requirements of the award
- Construction companies contributing to the programme by facilitating site visits and providing speakers at SfW classes and events in schools and colleges
- Innovative forms of portfolio building including photographic secondary evidence of candidates and their product evidence
- Practical projects being used to develop Health and Safety and Employability Skills. Examples of this included repair and restoration of school benches, painting and improving school corridors, painting and improving school cloakrooms, construction of storage shed
- Organising visits to local construction sites
- Course reviews being held and these being used to feed back to candidates
- Candidates often being encouraged to exceed the standards as defined in the SfW checklists
- Where required, samples of candidate product evidence were available for external verification visits
- Whenever possible, candidates were made available for interview during external verification visits
- Sampled checklists countersigned by assessors and internal verifiers
- Self reviews to be available for each craft being delivered
- Candidates daily diaries/reports being kept
- Very productive school/college partnerships are evolving with the SfW award
- Well written and very relevant feedback being given to candidates
- SfW candidates being allowed to gain experience by working with SVQ modern apprentices in workshops for short periods
- Standard construction site PPE being worn by SfW candidates and staff

- Team working fun exercises being used to develop the employability skills
- SfW candidates being included in college annual awards presentation schemes
- Candidates being given incentives for successful completion of the award e.g. being awarded a construction tool kit in one centre
- Many centres inviting external verifiers into workshops where they can observe SfW candidates

AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

- It is suggested that standardisation meetings are held and these are minuted, and made available during external verification visits
- Internal verification plans to be established as standard practice
- Internal verification reports to be available for external verification visits
- CPD to be carried out for staff requiring training development in SfW practical subjects
- Specialised and upgraded workshops, dedicated to meeting the candidates needs in the SfW programmes, are required in some centres
- Candidates to be encouraged to wear standard PPE in workshops at all times. This is established best practice in many centres
- Candidate self review sheets require to be given a stronger focus in some centres
- SfW programmes which are being run in school locations (often for logistical geographic reasons) to include where possible, visit days and “tasters” to local colleges
- Structured, planned course programmes to be established for SfW programmes
- Clear systems to be implemented for the retention of all evidence related documentation as required for external verification
- To encourage candidates to take responsibility and ownership of their own portfolios
- Evidence related documentation to be available for all crafts during e.v. visits
- Standardised SfW portfolios to be implemented
- Ensuring that observation checklists are available for external verification. These are a critical aspect of verification and will receive a strong focus.