National Qualifications 2015
Internal Assessment Report
Skills for Work: Creative Industries

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

National Courses

Titles/levels of National Courses verified:

C276 75 Skills for Work: Creative Industries (SCQF level 5)

FH60 11 Creative Industries: An Introduction
FH61 11 Creative Industries: Skills Development
FH62 11 Creative Industries: Creative Process
FH63 11 Creative Industries: Creative Project

General comments

All centres visited during the verification period continue to demonstrate an informed and accurate understanding of national standards and how they should be applied.

In all centres, assessments were administered to the standards exemplified in the National Assessment Bank material.

It was observed that centres are becoming increasingly confident in the production of internally devised instruments of assessment. All centres are encouraged to make use of the prior verification service offered by SQA.

In several cases Units were being delivered as stand-alone provision and often in conjunction with Units outwith the Skills for Work Course.

One centre had produced a clear Course outline and well developed briefs to incorporate a range of roles. They developed inspirational reading on the creative process, guidance on breaking down the planning roles and process and a peer feedback sheet on presentations enabling the development of both critical feedback skills and awareness of their role in the creative process. The consideration given to 'process' was highlighted by the External Verifier as good practice as it supported candidates' clear understanding of the breakdown of roles and detailed planning in their teams. There was evidence at this centre of student self-evaluation, demonstrating a clear sense of their learning journey and required next steps — particularly in relation to the development of their skills for work.

All centres sampled this year had successful external verification visits.

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

All centres were able to demonstrate their use of the Arrangements document to assist with the context for delivery. Documentation including Arrangements, Unit specifications, assessment instruments, exemplification materials, and evidence of internal verification and assessment decisions were made available to verifiers.

Assessors and internal verifiers were able to discuss confidently, the aims and intentions of the award and approaches to generating sufficient and appropriate evidence. Additionally, all centres were aware of the availability of SQA National Assessment Bank material.

A range of centres sampled this session were making use of National Assessment Bank (NAB) material and candidate evidence was found to be consistent across candidates and centres. It is clear from the External Verifiers' reports that centres, and candidates, continue to find these resources valuable and accessible. The verification team continued to highlight to centres that in developing instruments of assessment, briefs and tasks, they should encourage candidates to present evidence in creative ways. For example, Creative Industries: An Introduction could benefit from poster presentations, short video responses or audio 'podcasts', rather than written responses. Careful consideration should be given when designing such tasks. It is recommended that tasks should be given 'real-life contexts' where possible. Again, examples could include the production of a short promotional video which highlights the opportunities of working as a creative industries practitioner to be used to address the evidence required for Creative Industries: An Introduction.

Evidence Requirements

It was clear from External Verifiers' reports that all candidates produced thorough and well-presented folios. Candidate portfolios were comprehensive and varied from paper-based folios to electronic folios. It was therefore clear that candidates were being given clear instruction through well considered briefs and tasks, allowing them to generate the necessary evidence and present it appropriately.

An abundance and wide variety of evidence was made available for external verification, demonstrating standards of performance. In several cases, video recordings of candidate performance and accompanying observation checklists were made available. In addition, the observation checklists detailed candidate performance and provided valuable, constructive feedback. In almost all cases there was evidence to demonstrate candidates' actions in response to feedback.

Administration of assessments

In centres where the NAB material was used to support assessment, it was found that this material assisted with the consistent application of standards set out in Unit specifications.

In several centres standardisation meetings were held prior to the commencement of the Course to ensure consistency of approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. In one particular centre, pre-delivery standardisation and planning minutes were available for external verification. These minutes also included information on integration of assessment and detailed types and standards of evidence expected. These records were of value to delivery teams, and for external verification.

Administration of the Course and recording of assessment decisions and overall attainment was very clear across most centres. The decisions made by assessors were found to be consistent, and in almost all cases there was evidence that internal verification had taken place. In most instances, assessments were marked by an assessor and then cross-marked and signed off by a designated internal verifier.

Many centres provided evidence of discussions between assessors, cross- and counter-signed marked work, as well as other verification activity benefiting delivering staff as well as internal verifiers and External Verifiers.

Areas of good practice

In all observed cases it was evident that delivery staff were highly skilled in their subject area. High levels of enthusiasm among staff were also evident. A consistent observation has been that staff are committed to giving candidates a valuable, enjoyable and varied experience and are happy to share their extensive and up-to-date experience with their learners.

In one centre the Introduction and Skills Development Units were used to support and develop knowledge and skills in learners undertaking intensive (18 week) National Certificate awards in Music and Art and Design. As this was their first year of delivery, the centre made use of NAB material alongside prior verified material to ensure national standards were being met. There were also excellent examples of this centre integrating the Introduction Unit with Introduction to the UK Music Industry, found in the NC Music framework. The Skills Development Unit was also used to good effect to address and contextualise the output of an in-house skills profiling tool.

In another centre, candidates were using the Creative Process and Creative Project Units to prepare and publish a range of graphic novels. This took place within the context of art, design, marketing and publishing. Candidates demonstrated a mature understanding of both the skills for work and technical/ creative skills they had developed throughout their course of study. Candidates in this centre were able to clearly demonstrate a clear understanding of their work's place within a wider creative industries context and articulate clearly the range of processes they had to go through to publish and reach their audience. Once completed the final product was made available to purchase in local comic book stores and as web comics. Candidates at this centre were found to be highly engaged and motivated by all of the stages involved in the project.

The Creative Process and Project Units were used by a Drama department as part of a Theatre in Education, access to wider learning opportunity. This is an exciting and innovative transition project enabling senior students to support and mentor P7s, exploring their transition to secondary school. The Course provided a 'real-life' working environment, linking with the school's P7 transition programme. Students were initially supported by a teacher, as well as using their own independent research into theatre companies, to develop awareness of the roles and responsibilities involved in professional theatre companies. Through

research at primary schools about transition concerns, the students identified a theme (friendship), created a script and then performed their play at individual cluster primaries. Students also visited a range of primary schools to run drama workshops. The Course enabled students to develop a range of skills for work including independent learning, leadership and teamwork. They were enabled to take responsibility for both their own learning and to support the learning of each other and younger P7 pupils. One of the students commented how the Course helped to develop leadership and teamwork skills and the associated roles and responsibilities. She felt the Course made the group very much aware of the importance of planning to the success of such a project.

Audio work stations running industry-standard software (pro-tools) aided candidates from one centre in the production of recorded material. Through this process candidates were able to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of wider industry issues such as copyright and the value of creative content. The recording project was fore-fronted by the development of skills for work and candidates understood how these were developed in a creative industries context.

Specific areas for improvement

Where challenges with using NABs within an integrated and contextualised curriculum exist, centres can seek advice, through development visits, about how to be flexible with the use of NABs. Centres are also encouraged to seek prior verification of assessment materials if necessary.

Centres are encouraged to be creative with evidence-gathering by perhaps further developing the use of VLEs and new media methods of assessment and evidence recording.