



**Higher National and Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2013
Painting and Decorating**

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

Higher National Units

General comments

Staff at centres responsible for the delivery of the award are continuing to demonstrate a clear and sound knowledge of the requirements of the national standards and are providing evidence of competence on performance criteria for each of the Units being delivered within the Professional Development Award (PDA) at SCQF level 7 (Advanced Craft). This has been highlighted in numerous verification reports over the years and provides good evidence that the award is well established regarding understanding and delivery.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The review of the PDA 7, which was last carried out two years ago, is now well established and all centres involved in delivery of this award are now fully compliant with delivery requirements. From the evidence sampled during visits to centres this year, it was clear to see that centres and the associated staff delivering the award had become familiar with the changes, and comments had been recorded in verification reports. Evidence recorded by verifiers of practical workshop activities included comments on the very high standard of work being completed, and continuous improvement in providing realistic working environments. This was supported by checklists and written assessment material providing evidence.

Evidence Requirements

The purpose of external verification is to provide support to staff and centres delivering the award and confirm that sufficient, appropriate and authentic evidence is being produced with observation of live assessment being carried out where possible.

The evidence provided in verification reports indicates that discussions between staff at centres involved in delivery (assessors, External Verifiers and Internal Verifiers) demonstrate a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements for all Units contained within PDA 7.

Observation allows verifiers to confirm that centre staff are meeting all requirements of Unit criteria. Written evidence provided by centres for sampling during verification also showed a consistent approach.

Administration of assessments

From the written and practical candidate assessments sampled from PDA 7, it was evident that judgement of candidate performance between assessors at centres, and also across centres, was consistent. The centres verified this year were able to provide sufficient evidence of structured delivery of assessments provided for viewing, confirming that all candidates were fully prepared prior to assessment taking place both from the practical and written perspective.

Evidence of internal verification activity of assessment evidence and assessment decisions remained robust across all centres involved in delivery for this year, ensuring that quality assurance remains high.

Informal discussions with verifiers and staff at centres again revolved around the possible development of generic assessment for all centres involved in delivery of PDA 7, as well as the added benefits to SQA of quality assurance at centres involved. Verifiers, although in full agreement with delivering staff, pointed out the fact that this should be a development project led by SQA and that although it has been discussed, no timeframe has been agreed and at present this is still pending.

Most centres involved in delivery had held an informal meeting to look at possibly developing these assessments as a group. It may be an opportunity for SQA to get involved at this time when there is a positive move from centres to produce required assessments.

General feedback

Evidence within reports provided this year continues to show that candidates are being given good feedback on performance throughout the award and staff are providing support and guidance where required.

Centres ensured where possible, that candidates were available for interview during the visit. Candidates interviewed were happy with the award; the high standards of the learning environment; the quality of learning support (if required); the pace of assessment; and the feedback given by the assessors at appropriate intervals.

There was no reported evidence of any barriers to achievement at the centres visited this year. Access to all assessment was appropriate, and if required, tailored to suit the individual needs of candidates.

Areas of good practice

There were a number of items of good practice noted during verification visits, specifically:

- ◆ the diligent and hardworking approach adopted by staff delivering the award
- ◆ the professional approach of continually looking to improve delivery
- ◆ good use of centres' workshops to produce a realistic work environment
- ◆ high standard of completed practical work across centres
- ◆ good use of IT to access assessment material online and to carry out research
- ◆ research projects providing a good learning experience within PDA 7 for candidates with high-level results being produced

Specific areas for improvement

The development of generic assessment for all Units within PDA 7.

SVQ awards

General comments

Construction: Painting and Decorating SVQ/SBATC	level 2 G8NP 22
Construction: Painting and Decorating SVQ/SBATC	level 3 G8NR 23
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Construction: Painting and Decorating SVQ/SDF	level 3 G9G8 23

2013 was a challenging year for all centres undertaking verification due to the nature of forthcoming changes to the level 3 award. Fourteen visits were carried out across all centres (three using the new approach model). There was a continued demonstration of a sound knowledge of the requirements of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and the required level of competence and performance specific to each Unit contained within the award being delivered.

Despite the last minute changes to the new PDA/Training and Assessment Programme (TAP) in Painting and Decorating at the start of the academic year, all of the centres were complying with the requirements of the assessment strategy which supports and underpins the NOS. This includes ensuring that all assessors and Internal Verifiers have relevant occupational expertise, knowledge of the NOS, and a clear understanding of the assessment strategy.

It was noticeable again, similar to the previous year, that centres are continuing to update staff with their existing 'D' Units to the required 'A' and 'V' Units as specified by the assessment strategy.

Centres provided appropriate and effective samples of continuous professional development (CPD) activity containing industry-linked vocational up-skilling to meet criteria within the assessment strategy. Some comments expressed concerns that CPD should be more reflected towards trade-related development.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessors at the majority of centres this year were familiar with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and the exemplification materials used to support delivery of the TAPs' materials. Generic Units are seen as being holistic and embedded throughout Units within the awards. There was good advice being shared by the external verification team with centres on the recent review of the TAPs/PDA.

Standardising the structuring of the delivery of the award throughout all centres ensured that regular feedback on candidate performance was provided and therefore allowed for support and development measures to be implemented if required.

Evidence Requirements

There was a continued focus following on from last year on providing guidance and advice on methods of capturing evidence for Generic Units for verification purposes, and exemplars of recording documentation being shared for use. However, there was recorded evidence of very good exemplars of generic evidence being captured and recorded across a few centres.

Structuring the delivery of the award throughout centres will hopefully ensure that regular feedback on candidate performance allows for support and development measures to be implemented, if and when required.

Administration of assessments

Assessors and Internal Verifiers at most centres continue to show that they have a clear knowledge and understanding of the Evidence Requirements of the Units within the award and the TAPs' assessment materials. Secondary evidence with regards to photographs, site evidence reports and checklists, where used, were being applied appropriately by staff.

External verification activity focused on looking at delivery of the qualifications across the whole award to confirm sufficient, appropriate and authentic evidence on the TAPs. This continues to be captured, along with secondary evidence where applicable, and is supported by observations of live, practical assessments at centres where possible.

Equal opportunities policy, supported by evidence contained within the candidates' portfolios, ensures that assessment and reassessment opportunities are being made available to candidates at the majority of centres.

In a few centres there was photographic evidence of completed work within candidates' portfolios. External Verifiers continued to advise centres that to ensure authenticity, any secondary evidence, ie photographs, should be of candidates carrying out work activities and should include dates.

The assessment process at most centres maintained the status quo from last year (due to the hold on the release of the new award) and is being supported with ample resources and a realistic workshop facility for candidates.

All centres verified had a structured delivery of assessment, confirming that all Units used for delivery of the award are assessed in a logical sequence. This allows candidates to be fully prepared for each stage of the assessment process. Internal verification at the majority of centres was effective and robust ensuring that all Units delivered within the award are quality assured. Monitoring of assessors' decisions, both from a practical and written perspective, contributed to ongoing assessor development.

A few centres' staff were still assessing and verifying candidates under their D Unit qualifications and not to the A and V1 standards; this has to be addressed by the centre and External Verifiers advised on reasons and requirements. This

issue was also highlighted in last year's verification and should be a focus for verification again next year.

General feedback

Candidates interviewed gave very positive responses regarding being kept informed of their progress and achievement on a regular basis. Evidence throughout the candidate portfolios confirmed this, and also the fact that assessment and reassessment opportunities were being made available to candidates.

Almost all of the centres verified had candidates available for interview during the external visit. Comments noted that all candidates were very positive towards the award and enjoyed the practical aspects of the coursework

Areas of good practice

Candidates at almost all centres verified demonstrated extremely high levels of practical skill and competency which gave them opportunities to progress onwards to the next level of their programme.

Centres continued to provide appropriate and effective CPD records of activity linked to vocational up-skilling which met with the requirements of the assessment strategy. However, there could still be improvements in the type of CPD carried out by staff and centres.

A structured delivery of assessment was evident across most centres. This allowed for confirmation that all Units within the award are being assessed in a logical sequence and that candidates are fully prepared for each stage of the assessment process.

Centres were becoming more aware of using IT as a resource tool and aid for learning.

There was good work being produced by candidates in relation to the Colour Unit.

There was evidence of centres using virtual learning environments (VLEs) as learning tools for candidates.

Centres, as demonstrated last year, continue to develop partnerships with external agencies in order to make use of locations for external projects to take place in order to provide realistic working environments.

Some centres were looking to continuously improve delivery by incorporating the use of a reflective diary for candidates to record a daily/weekly work record, and then sharing this practice with other centres through their External Verifiers.

Centre-devised programmes were being used to improve standards in teaching methods.

Specific areas for improvement

The majority of centres had addressed the issue of staff updating D Units. However in a few centres, staff still had not updated existing D Units to the current A and V Units, and were working to the standard as required by the assessment strategy. There is a directive to ensure that staff with D Units work towards guidelines of V1 for verification purposes. This issue should continue to be monitored by External Verifiers.

In a few centres, as in previous years, verification issues were raised about some missing candidate and assessor signatures from candidate portfolios. There may well have been reasons for this, however it's important that systems are kept up to date where possible in order to ensure quality of standards. It should be ensured that External Verifiers continue to monitor this situation.

Integration and signposting of Generic Units within practical activities, and the capturing of this evidence, has shown a marked improvement from previous years. Hopefully with external verification activity this year placing a focus on Generic Units and capturing evidence, this will continue to improve. Guidance and information on the use of the 'new Generic Units' when introduced to centres will be a requirement, and External Verifiers should be sympathetic in their approach during the coming verification year.

In some centres, photographic evidence of completed practical work within candidate portfolios is a good source of secondary evidence, however it would benefit External Verifiers if centres used photographs (with dates if possible) of candidates working on practical activities. This would provide complete authentication of work.

A number of points relating to internal verification were reported at a few centres. Specific issues included:

As mentioned in previous years, ineffective internal verification procedures were still being carried out with regards to required signatures on candidate folios. This should continue to be monitored.

There were a number of centres that did not have candidates available for interview during the external verification visits. This was problematic as it should be a main focus point for all verification visits. This was a recorded point in previous years' reports, however, in defence of centres, it may be the case that due to timetabling and availability it is not always possible to have candidates available.