



# **Internal Assessment Report: HN Social Care**

Sector Panel or SSC: Qualification Support Team and Care Stakeholder Group

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

## Titles/levels of Higher National Units verified

This year the team selected the mandatory Units in the applied social sciences to form the basis of their discussions with centres:

DH3K34	Social Care Theory for Practice
DH3M34	Psychology for Social Care Practice
DH3N34	Sociology for Social Care Practice
DH3L34	Social Policy and its Application to Social Services Provision

As centres develop more integrated assessment, these Units are usually now combined with Units from the option section of the Course. We therefore also examined the following sample during visits:

DH3P34	Protection of Individuals from Possible Harm and Abuse
DJ1N34	Understanding and Supporting Behaviour
DG6D34	Working with Teams in a Care Setting
DH4234	Youth and Community Justice
DM0F34	Caring for Children in Secure Settings

## General comments

The External Verifier team met to plan our activity for the year at the start of 2008–09 session. We met again in February 2009 to look specifically at verification of the Graded Unit. These meetings were helpful in planning for our visits to centres.

Together we carried out 22 visits for the HNC Social Care and 18 visits for the Graded Unit. Visits were made to college and non-college centres delivering the HNC in Social Care.

The majority of visits were successful. Some of the salient points on good practice and areas for development are identified in the following section.

Overall there was a marked improvement in the integration of assessments across the whole HN Course this year. It was clear that centres are becoming more confident in adopting this approach.

In one centre the verifier found assessor judgment was not meeting the standard required so placed a hold on certification pending some additional work. The situation was successfully resolved within a short timescale and a second successful verification visit took place.

## **Advice on good practice and areas for further development**

### **Good practice**

Verifiers identified the following summary of good practice and areas for development:

- ◆ Marking is definitive and supportive.
- ◆ Evidence of double marking is clear and well documented.
- ◆ Centres make good use of integrated assessment.
- ◆ Systems are in place to show where remediation has been met and original scripts have been retained.
- ◆ Induction and student support are excellent.
- ◆ Student handbooks are good.
- ◆ Internal verifiers provide good, constructive feedback.
- ◆ Centres are commended on their integrated approach to assessment.

### **Areas for further development**

- ◆ Look at revising assignment length to reduce candidate overloading.
- ◆ A more robust approach to standardisation is required.
- ◆ Standardisation should be more closely monitored through meetings.
- ◆ Consider further development of links into SVQ Units.
- ◆ Ensure currency of teaching materials and texts used.
- ◆ Clearly identify Unit Outcomes and Evidence Requirements on assessment instruments.
- ◆ Consider preparing a matrix of assessment instruments to aid integration.
- ◆ Identify due dates for remediation/re-submission.

### **PDA Care Services Management**

This session, following discussion with the verification team, we were also asked to look at a sample of five colleges offering the PDA. This was felt to be important as this Course is being reviewed in session 2009–10 and this sample would provide valuable input to the review.

Four of these visits were successful and one visit identified issues of insufficient candidate evidence at the level required. This issue required additional work prior to certification of the candidates.

### **Units**

DV0K35	Supporting and Managing the Protection of Individuals
DV0J35	Managing Policies and Procedures in Care Services
DH40 35	Supervision in Care Settings
DV0H35	Leading the Management of Change in Care Services

### **Good practice**

- ◆ Feedback to candidates is supportive and appropriately developmental.
- ◆ A variety of instruments of assessment are used, and some integration is taking place.
- ◆ The integration of class-based and distance learning modes of delivery is supported by a Virtual Learning Environment.
- ◆ Four integrated assessments cover all Evidence Requirements.
- ◆ One assessment was carried out in college to ensure authenticity of evidence.

### **Areas for further development**

- ◆ Assessments do not identify the Outcomes or specific Evidence Requirements.
- ◆ The quality of some handouts is poor.
- ◆ Centres should ensure candidate evidence is at the correct level for the Unit.
- ◆ Centres need to clearly identify where remediation is required.
- ◆ Centres should consider further integration to ensure candidates are not overloaded with assessment.

# Higher National Graded Units

## Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified

F291 34  
DV0G 35

## General comments

### F29134

This was the first year of teaching to the revised Graded Unit. Centres broadly welcomed the changes and found the marking process much more robust. They also welcomed the opportunity to provide a little more structure and guidance for candidates and the opportunity for some remediation within the process.

The External Verifier team held a development session on 13 February to become familiar with the new guidelines. The following is an extract from the minutes of that meeting:

- ◆ Two HNC Graded Unit scripts were marked blind, using the basic scoring grid provided by SQA and a more detailed breakdown of scoring provided by a non college-centre. It was an interesting exercise and we found that the more detailed breakdown led to lower marks overall for candidates, though it helped markers to be clear about what marks were awarded for.
- ◆ We discussed the award of two marks for authentication and where these should be placed or whether they should be counted in the overall total mark. There is also concern that marks are awarded for a simple signature from the line manager/supervisor and that the same mark is given if a full report has been prepared and submitted.

A more detailed feedback report from this meeting was provided to the Qualification Support Team on 6 March 2009.

All but one of the visits for the Graded Unit were successful. However, at one centre the verifier found that there was insufficient candidate evidence and that the assessor judgements were not in line with SQA guidance. The centre was asked to ensure that each stage was marked separately and that each stage was passed before the candidate proceeds to the next one. They were also asked to use specific marking criteria to ensure a standardised approach to the award of marks.

The following comments reflect the areas of good practice and areas for further development identified in the verification reports.

## **Advice on good practice and areas for further development**

### **Good practice**

- ◆ Assessment decisions are clear and transparent.
- ◆ Feedback is available to candidates.
- ◆ There is good evidence of Course team standardisation.
- ◆ Centres have shown an ability to reflect and evaluate on an ongoing basis.
- ◆ Good guidance is provided to placement agencies.
- ◆ Encouraging comments are given to candidates at the planning stage.
- ◆ Feedback sheets are used well.
- ◆ There are excellent placement opportunities, providing challenging work.
- ◆ Assessment documents give candidates sound guidance.

### **Areas for further development**

- ◆ Ensure candidates reference their work.
- ◆ Candidates should provide a bibliography.
- ◆ Ensure marks awarded are not too high.
- ◆ Ensure original work is retained when remediation is required.
- ◆ Give clearer guidelines to candidates on planning for assessment.
- ◆ Consider staff development on providing feedback to candidates through planning meetings.
- ◆ Consider the timing of assessment to maximise opportunities to cross reference into SVQ.
- ◆ Develop a more structured pro forma for marking.

### **Unit DV0G 35**

This was the first external verification of the Graded Unit within the PDA Care Services Management. As such, we used it to gather information for the review of this programme. All verification visits for this Unit were successful.

### **Good practice**

- ◆ Good clear marking guidelines.
- ◆ Constructive feedback.
- ◆ Fair assessment judgements.
- ◆ Flexible delivery and support for candidates.
- ◆ Close partnership with employers.
- ◆ All candidates are professionally qualified and experienced.