![SQA logo]

Internal Assessment Report 2010: Personal and Social Development (159)

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

National Qualifications (NQ) Awards

Titles/levels of NQ Awards verified

G9D2 43 and G9CY 44: Employability Group Awards
G976 44 and G9AH 45: NPA Enterprise and Employability
G9D3 45 and G9D4 46: Leadership Awards
C255 10, C255 11, and C255 12: Personal Development

General comments

NQ Awards are proving to be an attractive option, and much of the verification activity carried out was approvals and development visits. Centres are keen to run with the new Awards. General feedback indicates that the Awards are well structured and fit into the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence: confident individuals, successful individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors. Also, these new Awards are best suited to providing more opportunities for vocational training, as set out in *Building the Curriculum 3.*

Employability Awards (SCQF levels 3 and 4)
These are proving very popular as the Award itself is structured in bite-sized Units, allowing a variation of 10 and 20 hours of learning, which allows candidates to achieve NQ Units and gain recognition of their learning. The new Unit layout and the flexibility to deliver two mandatory Units and one optional Unit appeals to both candidates and centres.

The Awards are being considered in a wide range of contexts, eg vocational contexts in colleges including creative industries, private training providers, inductions to college programmes, school vocational programmes, and the Princes Trust. The Award comprises four Units: Preparing for Employment: First Steps; Building Own Employability Skills; Responsibilities of Employment; and Dealing with Work Situations.

NPA Enterprise and Employability
National Progression Awards (NPAs) are designed to help candidates reach their goals. They are aimed at assessing skills and knowledge in vocational areas linked to National Occupational Standards. The Enterprise and Employability Awards exist at SCQF levels 4 and 5. In order to complete the Group Award, four credits must be successfully completed. A substantial part of the NPA contains Personal Development Units in Self Awareness, Self and Work, Enterprise Activity, Preparing to Work, Work Experience, and the Core Skill of Working with Others.

Leadership Awards
The new Leadership Awards operate at SCQF levels 5 and 6. The Awards aim to help candidates understand the meaning of leadership by finding out about different leadership styles, skills and qualities. Candidates will be able to compare a variety of leaders as well as finding out what makes an effective

leader. Most importantly, they will be able to use the knowledge gained to help them consider their own potential for leadership and to develop their own leadership abilities as they take on a leading role in a planned activity. The Awards comprise two Units: Leadership: an Introduction (20 hours) and Leadership in Practice (40 hours).

Personal Development
There is no external assessment for this Course. Candidates must pass all four Units at SCQF levels 4–6 to achieve the Course Award. The four mandatory 40-hour Units are: Self Awareness, Self in Society, Self and Work, and Practical Abilities. At SCQF level 3, the Course consists of three mandatory Units: Self in Society, Self and Work, and Practical Abilities. The Self Awareness Unit is a freestanding Unit, and as such candidates can be entered for the Unit, but it is not included as a mandatory Unit in the Course at SCQF level 3.

Personal social development (PSD) involves assessing the process and not the end result, which may or may not have been successful.

Marking schemes are not always a mandatory requirement. Where marking schemes were identified, SQA marking schemes, NAB (National Assessment Bank), SQA assessment exemplars, and centre-devised materials were in use. Centre-devised assessment instruments and marking schemes were appropriate and comprehensive in the verification sample.

Centres used appropriate marking schemes and checklists which showed the level of pass that the candidate had achieved. Staff comments were well documented in cases where remediation was required, and helpful in supporting the candidate to understand how to re-submit evidence where appropriate.

Assessors provide a master teaching file which incorporates learning and teaching resources, an appropriate Unit specification, assessment instruments, exemplar materials, and a teaching schedule of the planned activities. Course Arrangement documents are not always available. Verifiers usually ask if the assessor has seen the document, and if not they discuss how to access an electronic copy downloaded from the SQA website. Sometimes they carry out this exercise in the centre during the visit.

Assessors have a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements for Units and Courses, and this is reflected in the responses from candidates:

♦ Candidates met with external verifiers and talked enthusiastically about the projects they had done.
♦ They enjoyed the freedom to carry out challenging tasks and the opportunity to make adjustments to plans as problems occurred.
♦ Candidates talked about the value they had gained from work experience and their wider involvement in the community.
♦ Many had gained confidence and enjoyed the experience of working as part of a team.

♦ Others commented that they had developed the skill of being able to reflect on how they had carried out their tasks, and to consider their own individual role and the role of others.

♦ Candidates taking personal development Units and/or Group Awards were highly motivated and eager to talk about their experiences. Personal development Units and Courses focus on self-development and provide a learning experience which is reflective and has a positive impact on individuals and their future personal, social and vocational goals.

There was good evidence of robust internal verification procedures, supported by relevant and appropriate documentation. Good practice included:

♦ subject knowledge expertise

♦ teacher guides explaining the content of the Unit

♦ teaching and learning approaches and assessment procedures

♦ records of internal verification assessment decisions, sampling and standardisation arrangements

Some centres need to develop an internal verification policy and procedures, while others are well advanced. Verifiers referred assessors to SQA's *Quality Framework: a Guide for Centres*.

External verification activity revealed that assessments are at the appropriate level. However, assessors still need to be made aware of the need to differentiate between the levels, based on the five main principles:

♦ amount of support learners receive

♦ level of participation by learners

♦ level of understanding of learners

♦ complexity of tasks given to learners

♦ level of maturity displayed by learners

There was good evidence of the use of blogs, logs, diaries, video, PowerPoint presentations, e-mail, interactive IT resources, photographs, wall displays, and assessor observations of candidate performance. Project work featured highly and there was a wide range of challenging activities carried out. Staff and centres are to be commended for their efforts to promote learning and teaching approaches that encourage self-awareness and self-evaluation, develop interpersonal and task management skills, foster co-operative working, reflect and evaluate the three stages of the process (planning implementation and evaluation stages).

Assessment is mainly project- or folio-based, and as such, promotes open-book assessment conditions. Short answer questions are commonly used, as well as extended response questions. Self-evaluation tools, eg SWOT analysis and a range of interactive ICT learning tools, eg personality questionnaires and learning

styles, are common practice in the promotion of PSD. Investigative and research methods prove popular with candidates, as well as planned practical activities and events, eg fundraising, fair trade events, outward bound activities and work placements.

Areas of good practice

Employability Group Awards: G9D2 43 and G9CY 44

♦ One centre used SQA assessment support packs (ASPs) creatively, with interactive learning via the college intranet and Moodle.

♦ The Employability programmes are very well structured and innovative, embracing an interactive self-development process across a variety of disciplines including design, journalism, technical theatre, music and arts development.

♦ Funding is allocated from the Scottish Arts Council with a partnership model, combining support from a local arts centre and arts academy, and industry mentors, with the programme under the co-ordination of the centre.

♦ There is college-wide access to learning materials on-site and off-site.

♦ The delivery of Employability in a variety of art disciplines combines a learner and internship application process in Business Management, Journalism, Promotions, Communication and Media, and Music Production.

♦ Contextualised case studies related to the arts industry are used in the assessment delivery.

♦ There is a combined delivery of Google Docs and blogger.com for the innovative delivery of the Award.

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified

D36J 10/11: Local Investigations
D36H 09/10/11: Work Experience
F57F 10: Preparing to Work
Personal Development Units: Self Awareness, Self in Society, Self and Work, Practical Abilities (SCQF levels 3 and 4)
E94T: Job Seeking Skills
EDOW 10: Team Working
D36N 11: Enterprise Activity
EA1W 04: Guidance
EA1W 09: Guidance: On-going
EA1X 09: Guidance: Pre-Exit
DOMN 09: Health Choices
E94B 04: Induction
D36J 10: Local Investigations
E9K7 09: Personal Effectiveness
EA20 11: Roles and Behaviour
E94B 04: Induction

General comments

Centres have a very clear and accurate understanding of the National Standards required in the delivery of PSD Units.

Many of the Units sampled during external verification activity have been delivered in centres historically for a number of years. Staff are familiar with the Evidence Requirements. This is exemplified in the number of centres where good practice has been identified in a variety of subjects, eg Local Investigations, Work Experience, Team Working, and Job Seeking Skills.

In general, development issues underpin the need to understand the generic subject of PSD and the stages of the process in planning, implementing, reviewing and evaluating.

Centres are very well organised for external verification visits. Internal verification systems and procedures support the high standards of delivery in PSD. Some ad hoc procedures exist, but this is being addressed during visiting external verification. Centres are being encouraged to formalise their procedures and to develop an internal verification policy.

Great emphasis has been placed on the need for standardisation procedures. Verifiers have explained how this should operate, and this is beginning to develop. Sampling candidate folios across Outcomes and occurrences, and standardising the delivery of Units taught in a department and in the organisation itself, especially where there is a high uptake in PSD activity across the centre, are examples of this.

Verifiers consistently commented in the sample of EV activity carried out that assessors were very familiar with the Unit specification requirements and were exemplifying a consistently high standard. In the words of one external verifier: 'this work is simply outstanding'.

Assessors have up-to-date learning and teaching materials contained in master files. The internal verification procedures and records of IV activity are made available to the external verifier. External verification visits do contain an element of development, as assessors are usually keen to discuss assessment instruments and exemplification. If the EV feels that this is a big task then they will recommend a development visit. Often, though, assessment and exemplification of the standards is sorted out through short discussion and clear direction in order to locate appropriate resource materials.

Areas of good practice

College A: Local Investigations

♦ The internal assessment of the candidates' work was very clear and thorough as a result of excellent development work.

♦ Internal verification was carried out as soon as the class lecturer had finished marking her folios, which allowed feedback to be given if any difficulties arose.

♦ The tutor compiled a new student pack. This clearly outlined the aims of the Course, whilst giving the students a structured format when carrying out their self-assessment, planning, implementation and reviewing of their project, and in monitoring their progress.

School A: Work Experience

♦ The work experience programme was designed and developed by the local authority and is combined with the certification of a Youth Achievement Award for vocational pupils.

♦ Self-assessment of skills and qualities is set in context with target setting and action planning. This is further evidenced in the work placement review when candidates are asked to comment on their targets and skills.

♦ Work placement visits take place with a member of staff designated to this role.

♦ Photographic evidence of pupils doing work experience is featured on a wall display in the school.

School B: Work Experience

♦ The work experience programme has a clear structure and is delivered through the social education programme, to ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to fully prepare themselves before their placements. The school implements the WorkIT programme but maintains its own hard copy diary.

- Health and safety of pupils is a top priority.
- Access to computers is very organised, using a block booking arrangement which is agreed with the ICT faculty.
- Additional support is made available from other areas in the school for pupils who experience any difficulties (ASDAN, Social and Vocational Skills, and Support for Learning).

College B: Work Experience

- The Intermediate 2 Work Experience Unit, delivered by the Hairdressing faculty, was a model of good practice within the college.
- The master teaching pack laid strong foundations for the Unit to be delivered consistently across the college.
- Students had clear guidelines and goals, with the Performance Criteria clearly set out. There was consistent application of judgements across the folios, and each student had clear feedback from staff which was dated and signed. The materials were up-to-date and appropriate. There were clear recording sheets which showed performance and achievement for each class.
- The materials used in the Work Experience Unit allowed students to match what was being taught in college with current working practices in the industry.
- Access 3 materials were good. Course materials were clear and well set out, and students had produced some very good evidence.
- The college internal verification policy was excellent.

School C: Job Seeking Skills

- featured ICT to break down barriers to learning
- featured a colour coded system to highlight requirements for each Outcome
- comprehensive staff interaction with pupils
- overall quality and wealth of evidence produced for each pupil
- variety of learning and teaching methodologies used to suit each pupil

College C: Team Working

- First year Engineering students needed to pass this Unit to enable them to progress to the next level in their field. The use of video was very successful, as all students had access to this piece of work through the ICT system. This was very useful when completing written evidence after the practical assessment was completed.
- Teaching and learning materials were created in a college format, ensuring consistency of standards across different groups and different tutors.
- Online self-evaluation tools were used by students to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Areas for improvement

Local Investigations

♦ The external verification sample revealed that the breadth of investigations included studies of local topics, and issues related to health, childcare, and alcohol abuse. Investigation topics should be monitored to maintain a breadth of subjects that focus on current local issues.

Work Experience

♦ There was evidence of internal verification being discussed on an informal basis, eg staff comments and discussions, concern over supervisor reports that are not completed by work placements, and differentiation between vocational and academic pupil folios. Informal procedures need to be documented using formal checklists. For example, external verifiers continue to encourage staff to record internal verification procedures using a more formal approach, eg minutes of meetings, recording standardisation procedures and assessment decisions, and sampling candidate evidence.

♦ Centres continue to combine an electronic system (WorkIT) with centre-devised paper versions. WorkIT is an online process, and centres find this time consuming when carrying out assessments and difficult to manage where large numbers of pupils require access to a computer terminal. The electronic version of the diary (Equip) can provide an incentive to pupils and an opportunity for them to evaluate their achievements of that day online.

♦ There is still a need to establish a clear use of target setting, giving the pupils a clear focus of what they wish to achieve from their work experience.

♦ External verification activity provided the opportunity for two centres, due to their close proximity, to consider establishing a Work Experience working group to look at difficulties and possible solutions. This would further enhance the verification process by establishing a standard based on the specifications laid down by SQA.

♦ Differentiation between the levels was discussed during external verification visits. Centres need to reflect on the more rigorous requirements across the levels.

Personal Development (Self Awareness, Self in Society, Self and Work, and Practical Abilities

♦ Verification activity consisted mainly of development visits when centres had requested support to find out about the PD Units and the Group Awards. Feedback suggests the Units are proving to be very popular at SCQF levels 3 and 4. Centres are keen to use the NABs and found the marking information section exemplified the folio level and the standard required.