



**National Qualifications 2017
Internal Assessment Report
Skills for Work: Construction
Crafts**

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

National Courses

Skills for Work: Construction Crafts at SCQF level 4 and level 5

General comments

There was a slight decrease in the number of selected centres this session. A total of 16 centres were externally verified as opposed to 18 in the last session. This continued, however, to provide a balanced view of the overall delivery of the award. Of the 16 centres visited all but two were accepted after the first visit. The main reasons for the holds being imposed on the unsuccessful centres are outlined below:

- ◆ Insufficient evidence for unit DM7C 10 Employability Skills — no candidate review sheets available for any units sampled.
- ◆ Insufficient evidence of internal verification across all units sampled.
- ◆ The plumbing unit was presented as having been completed, however the following items were missing or incomplete:
 - No risk assessment.
 - No employability skills reviews from the practical units. These review sheets are integral parts of the evidence required to achieve the Employability Skills units at both National 4 and 5 levels.
 - With the product evidence it was difficult to identify what work belonged to each candidate, ie no names on candidates' work.
 - The Employability unit had not been completed particularly well, with much of the evidence still to be completed.
 - With only four or five weeks left to run on the course, there was no paper evidence for electrical or joinery; this included risk assessments, material lists and reviews. There had been an attempt at one risk assessment, but it had not been marked by the assessor, and it was difficult to identify exactly which trade area it was specific to.

Guidance and support was offered by external verifiers to both unsuccessful centres, and this resulted in the holds being lifted following second visits.

Once again all centres successfully visited were using National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials for assessment purposes, and these were proving very effective in measuring the candidates' progress regarding their employability skills. All centres were fully resourced to meet the requirements of the units and in general delivery was well planned.

Where candidates were interviewed it was clear they were fully aware of the employability aspect of these awards and that they were enjoying the practical activities contained within the craft units.

Health and safety in the workplace continues to be of high importance within the delivery of these awards, and this was clearly demonstrated throughout all of the successful visits.

Course arrangements, unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All 16 centres visited were using NAB materials and Assessment Support Packs (ASPs) to deliver the award to candidates, and in doing so fully met the above requirements of the award.

Evidence requirements

Once again, in general, successful centres had retained good paperwork in the form of checklists, self-evaluations and knowledge evidence. Most of the centres visited were making very good use of secondary photographic evidence within their candidate portfolios. The links between the Construction Crafts units and the Employability Skills units continue to be well evidenced.

Bearing in mind that it is not mandatory to retain practical activity models for external verification of these awards, it is worth stating that there was good evidence of this type available in each of the successful centres visited. It was clear that in the successful centres effective internal verification systems were ensuring that assessment decisions were accurate and fair.

Administration of assessments

Assessment paperwork was appropriate in all successful instances, with centres using nationally-devised materials, and in all cases assessment decisions had been subject to effective internal verification procedures.

Where negative outcomes were recorded it was clear that internal quality assurance had not been effective and in both instances this activity had been almost completely overlooked. The nature of this award places great emphasis on effective internal quality assurance processes being in use, and where this is not the case there will continue to be problematic areas for defaulting centres when external verification takes place.

Areas of good practice

There were many examples of good practice recorded within this year's reports, the following is a representative selection of instances where delivering centres are excelling:

- ◆ A number of centres took candidates on site visits to local companies. Activities included using a short questionnaire to get candidates to reflect on what was seen on the day with regard to health and safety and work processes.
- ◆ In one centre candidates complete a unit evaluation for the Employability unit and this reinforces the skills required for the world of work.

- ◆ In one centre staff have incorporated a real-life project within the school environment with work carried out in the nursery to coincide with the Employability unit. This is valuable for the students to see the link between the skills they are working on and real-life work.
- ◆ Good presentation of work was noted in several cases: candidates' work was neatly collated and units easily identified for verification purposes; candidate practical work on display.
- ◆ The importance of good facilities in several centres was stressed, whether a purpose-built workshop for delivery of the construction units, or plentiful supplies of tools, machinery, and other equipment.
- ◆ The importance of good communication throughout the delivery of the award was emphasised.
- ◆ Good use of photographic evidence of practical work, for example in a candidate photographic logbook, or using Edmodo to store images.
- ◆ In one centre, an employability skills workbook is being completed by each candidate to further enhance understanding of employer / employee requirements.
- ◆ Unit self-evaluation sheets can be completed by candidates at end of units to help inform staff to plan and improve delivery.
- ◆ It was noted in one centre that candidate product assessment evidence for units DM7W 10 Practical Copper Pipework and DX0J 11 Bench Joinery was to a very high standard.
- ◆ Good progression from this course onto full apprenticeships in construction reported by several centres.
- ◆ In one centre, each student is required to sign an 'Employment Contract' before the course starts, which includes their national insurance numbers, and they earn points as 'wages' for each shift they complete with attendance and timekeeping, with their final wages going towards a trophy at the end of the course. This is an excellent example of employability training.
- ◆ Student timesheets can be used to help learners to identify the time required for each task undertaken.
- ◆ Outside speakers and guest presentations can help to conduct mock interview training and CV work with the learners.
- ◆ In one centre excellent student booklets/handouts for use on enhancing employability were created by staff.
- ◆ One centre hosts a programme called 'Meaningful May' in which the month is filled with as many events as possible. Among these is an event for local schools, where eight of them send an eight-person team to compete in a bridge building competition.
- ◆ Excellent levels of standardisation are ensured in one centre by requiring verification by a quality team before standardisation meetings can be signed off.
- ◆ In one centre a new member of staff is currently having all his units internally verified over a period of two years instead of the prescribed one year.
- ◆ College staff visit local schools to interview potential candidates; this enables the staff to emphasise the employability aspect of the course.

- ◆ Employability reviews were being carried out for every unit, which helped with motivation and employment prospects.
- ◆ Contact with staff in remote centres, whether via face to face meetings, or computer and smartphone, allows common targets and goals to be set.
- ◆ In one case the assessor was helped in his understanding of the subject area by the janitorial staff who were from trade backgrounds. More generally, staff need realistic CPD to broaden and extend their skill base to reflect true trade practices.
- ◆ Linking with a local construction company is excellent practice, with the opportunity for candidates to get site experience and CSCS cards.
- ◆ One centre delivers this award in partnership with a local college and very effective internal verification by college staff ensures a high quality of product for their candidates.
- ◆ One centre carries out its internal verification in line with a joint agreement between SQA and Highland Regional Council, and consequently ensures that this activity is very robust and effective.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ It would be useful to have a dedicated folder for all internal verification activity that has taken place. It would then be easy to identify the classes and candidates that have been selected for verification purposes.
- ◆ If photos are taken with the students in the photo, it would be more beneficial to have these show the ongoing process, not just the final result, so the student could see the progress they have made and the skills they have learned.
- ◆ Ensure working areas allow sufficient room; if problems are identified alternatives should be looked at.
- ◆ Getting someone in from industry to generate enthusiasm for a trade such as brickwork could help with candidate motivation. Use of external areas when the weather permits would also assist in reducing the burden of PPE constraints for such a physically demanding unit.
- ◆ Standardisation meetings to be held specifically for staff delivering the SfW Construction award.
- ◆ Sampling plan prepared at the beginning of each session to complement SfW unit delivery schedule.
- ◆ Assessor to provide candidate feedback where required in assessment paperwork.
- ◆ Where a centre has multiple sites, all sites should use the same SQA paperwork, such as checklists.
- ◆ There should be a sampling plan to complement delivery schedule, to ensure internal verification is spread throughout the year as each unit is completed and not end-loaded.
- ◆ Candidates in activities such as brickwork should wear all appropriate on-site PPE, such as hard hats and hi-vis jackets.

- ◆ Candidates and assessors to be encouraged to give more detailed comments / feedback where required.
- ◆ Four review sheets are sufficient for candidates to complete, one for each trade discipline.
- ◆ On the review sheets there should be more individual grading for each element (Skill/Attitude).
- ◆ In the practical exercises, the measurement must be done in mm.
- ◆ Sign and date all paperwork
- ◆ Staff still require additional CPD training in the specialist areas of Construction. This can be done in a variety of ways, eg attending college or having specialist staff come to the school and deliver the course in some sort of partnership agreement.
- ◆ Develop a master checklist that covers all reviews, risk assessments and units being delivered. This could be posted on the workshop wall, so that candidates and staff can measure the distance they have travelled.
- ◆ Continue to deliver National 4 before National 5, as candidates do struggle if they attempt direct entry into level 5
- ◆ Keep all candidates' documents in one folder for each candidate.
- ◆ CPD for staff should be in the course that they are expected to teach, which would give greater quality to the product that they are trying to deliver. In the case of bricklaying, at the very least, staff should complete the 2 bricklaying units i.e. 1 brick and 1/2 brick walling, as this would help improve the confidence of the staff member.
- ◆ Once staff have CPD in place a room for a bricklaying facility would need to be identified for the full delivery of these group awards. When the planning for this gets underway the school may wish to request a development visit.
- ◆ Employability Skills Review Sheets contained within the Craft units should be collated and located within the evidence for Unit DM7C 11 Employability Skills, thereby providing enough evidence for candidates to successfully achieve this unit.
- ◆ Where candidate evidence has been sampled by internal verification, documentation should be signed and dated by the internal verifier.